

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Resolution**

**Report to:** Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 18 July 2017  
**Subject:** Complex Safeguarding  
**Report of:** Strategic Director, Children’s Services

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**Summary**

The purpose of this report is to provide Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee with a progress update on how the Council and partners are responding to complex safeguarding issues. The report will cover Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) including the work of the Phoenix Protect Team and will outline future plans involving the development of a complex safeguarding hub.

**Recommendations**

The Committee are asked to note the contents of the report and explore the progress the Council is making in responding to CSE and service improvement.

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**Wards Affected:** All

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This is the second report submitted to Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee covering complex safeguarding. In November 2016 an initial report, introduced the concept of complex safeguarding and focused in detail on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and children and young people who were missing from home, care and education.
- 1.2 This report will focus on the impact from the Complex Safeguarding Strategy Addressing CSE 2016 – 2018 and will highlight the activity of the Phoenix Protect Service. In addition we will report on progress and developments in relation to developing a Complex Safeguarding Hub in Manchester.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 In 2016/17 complex safeguarding has continued to be an area of prolific activity with the issuing of a series of policy and procedural guidance. In February 2017 the Department for Education issued updated procedural guidance in relation to CSE and in March 2017 Anne Coffey published a follow up report Real Voices: Are they being heard? There has continued to be a national spotlight via television dramas covering CSE and missing.
- 2.2 In Greater Manchester work continues at pace to develop a consistent approach to complex safeguarding and there is the emergence of an outline complex safeguarding hub model. As a reminder the Greater Manchester Review of Children's Services (April 2016) defined complex safeguarding as:

***"Criminal activity (often organised), or behaviour associated to criminality, involving often vulnerable children where there is exploitation and/or a clear or implied safeguarding concern"***.

This has been adapted for the Manchester Complex Safeguarding Hub as we want to address exploitation of both children and adults; there is a recognition that it is those who have multiple vulnerabilities who are most likely to be criminally exploited. This is also reflected in the Manchester definition below:

***"Criminal activity (often organised), or behaviour associated to criminality, involving children, young people and adults with multiple vulnerabilities where there is exploitation, a risk of exploitation and / or a clear or implied safeguarding concern"***.

- 2.3 The Complex Safeguarding Hub will focus on the following strands of criminal exploitation:
- Sexual Exploitation
  - Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking (including County Lines)
  - Violent Extremism
  - Honour Based Abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation)
  - Organised Crime Groups / Urban Street Gangs (including Threats to Life).

Missing from Home and Care is considered as a common characteristic and indicator associated with the exploitation of children/young people and therefore will be a key function of the Complex Safeguarding Hub.

2.4 The concept of multiple vulnerabilities led to the establishment in 2016 of a complex safeguarding sub group reporting into the Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards. This sub group chaired by the Strategic Director of Children's Services brings together all complex safeguarding activity. Delivery groups are in place to deliver the various strategies and report on performance, notifications, best practice, policy development and the impact from the various strategies.

### **3.0 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

#### **3.1 Child Sexual Exploitation - Real Voices**

A follow up to Anne Coffey's Real Voices report was published in March 2017. This report looks at how far attitudes have changed in the police, agencies and the wider community across Greater Manchester. The report also seeks to understand whether children and young people have a stronger voice and whether this has had an impact service delivery. Key findings of the report are highlighted below:

- Cultural changes are evidence in the approach to CSE evidenced by increases in reporting of CSE offences and also an increase in intelligence reports. The report identifies an increase in all sexual offences against children and the number of children at risk of CSE.
- A heightened awareness amongst the wider public as a result of the work undertaken by Greater Manchester Police and Project Phoenix across Greater Manchester.
- Examples of innovative practice where young people have been involved in designing services such as Achieving Change Together (ACT). Anne Coffey sets a challenge for how this good practice and learning can be shared across Greater Manchester.
- The challenges posed by online exploitation. The increased use of mobile phones and social media increases the chance of exploitation of children and it is known that a significant proportion of grooming for CSE starts online.
- Working with the community has been a key part of the raising awareness of CSE to support protection of children and there has been strong messaging across a range of workers across Greater Manchester. The increase in intelligence reports shows increasing awareness in communities.

- Work with Voluntary and Community Sector engagement has taken place in some of the larger organisations but further work is required around some of the smaller organisations.
- Work with schools is key and the announcement that sex and relationship education will be made compulsory is welcomed. The vast majority of Manchester schools already teach sex and relationship education and it is recognised that to be effective this must be part of an ongoing school strategy.
- There have been increases in the numbers of children going missing - which is likely to be as a result of improved reporting but further work needs to take place to address the levels of children going missing. This also linked to challenges around children being placed in children's homes outside their home authority.

### **3.2 Child Sexual Exploitation in Manchester**

Manchester's response to addressing and tackling CSE is outlined in the refreshed *Complex Safeguarding Strategy Addressing CSE 2016- 2018*. The Strategy outlines our commitment to robustly safeguard children and young people through a city wide approach with partners and communities.

There are four key areas under which the activities of the strategy are framed; alert and empower, support and protect, disrupt and enforce, and monitor and improve.

- 3.3 Delivering the key priorities is the responsibility of a CSE Delivery Group which brings together partners from a range of areas including the Voluntary and Community Sector, Protect, GMP, Health including Sexual Health Services and Healthy Schools and Manchester City Council including Licensing, Early Help, Education and Youth Justice.

An update of activities undertaken in these key areas is detailed below:

### **3.4 Alert and Empower**

- 3.5 This includes a range of activities to raise awareness about CSE across organisations, businesses and communities. Work with taxis and licensed premises continues; a safeguarding paper including CSE is a part of the test for new taxi drivers. Briefings for businesses operating in both the daytime and night time economy have taken place to raise awareness across the city centre. The latest training for a wide range of businesses is being held in July and will cover child sexual exploitation and modern slavery.
- 3.6 Work with schools remains a priority for increasing awareness of CSE amongst children. The 'I Matter' resource pack developed by Healthy Schools was launched in October 2016 and is being regularly used by a number of secondary schools across the city. A resource is currently being developed by

Healthy Schools in partnership with schools and young people for children and young people with Special Education Needs.

- 3.7 Training is being delivered across a range of universal and targeted services to improve the understanding and awareness of staff across partner agencies. This has recently included training across Social Work and Early Help staff and further training is planned this year for wider partners such as Parks, Leisure and Housing staff.
- 3.8 Work to raise awareness in communities has been supported at a Greater Manchester level by the Project Phoenix work including the “It’s not Okay” campaign, including and increased online presence. Locally this has been supported with the CSE weeks of action, the most recent was held during the week commencing 19 June 2017 which focussed on sports club and was launched at the National Cycling Centre.

### **3.9 Support and Protect**

Providing early help and support is an essential part of supporting and protecting young people from CSE. A complex safeguarding team of four Early Help Practitioners site alongside the Challenger and Protect teams based at Greenheys Police Station. Their role is to ensure that a whole family approach is taken to working with young people who are identified as being at risk of organised crime gang activity and child sexual exploitation. These practitioners have also briefed the wider Early Help hubs to ensure that awareness of CSE is embedded in Early Help practice across the city. The team has worked with 24 families in partnership with the Protect Team.

- 3.10 Work is undertaken with the whole family and there is focused work with parents to educate and support them on understanding CSE; alongside work with the young person. Support includes informing parents about grooming, to be aware and look for particular behaviours, to understand internet safety and to look at push and pull factors for a young person. Help and support includes supporting the family with the emotional trauma after a particular CSE incident. Outlined below is a brief case example of work from early help with one family.

*This was a large family comprising of a Mother and her 8 children. One of the young people was frequently missing from home and was assessed as being at a high risk of CSE. This young person also had a poor relationship with her Mum. Concerns were also raised regarding Mum’s parenting of all the children and whether it was safe for the children to remain in Mum’s care. All the children were on a Child Protection Plan.*

*When Early Help started working with the family, initially Mum did not trust professionals and did not attend any meetings. Early Help undertook a lot of work with Mum around her parenting, what is appropriate to say in front of her children, not involving her children in disputes with their Fathers, and not sharing all her thoughts with the children. With a co-ordinated package of support from Early Help, Protect and Barnardo’s this family has made a lot of positive changes which is creating a more stable home for the family.*

### **3.11 Disrupt and Enforce**

Work takes place across the partnership, including Greater Manchester Police, Manchester City Council Compliance and Enforcement Teams, Licensing Teams and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service to use the range of powers available to disrupt and enforce against activities that lead to CSE. A recent operation has been coordinated through the Protect team, led by Greater Manchester Police in response to intelligence received and has involve multi-agency visits to premises from GMP, Licensing Out of Hours, Immigration Compliance and Enforcement, and Children's Services. Covert observations have also been undertaken by the City Councils Licensing Team.

### **3.12 Monitor and Improve**

In order to better understand the picture of CSE in Manchester, a CSE Profile is continually being developed. Whilst looking at the reports of CSE is a key part of this it is also important to look at the wider at risk population, by looking at warning signs and vulnerabilities. Data from a range of organisations has been sourced to identify the prevalence of these risk factors. Many of these risk factors are clearly present in the individuals flagged as at risk of exploitation. A significant majority were identified as being children in need with over two thirds having a history of being reported missing and over half a history of persistent absence from school.

3.13 As detailed in the Anne Coffey report, online locations have also been identified in the profile as prevalent in the CSE crime reported to the police, with a variety of social media platforms utilised in order to facilitate CSE. Analysis of offending history identified that offenders were more likely to be involved in other types of criminality including violent crime, acquisitive crime and criminal damage or arson.

3.14 Case studies involving some young offenders identified that the risk factors that are understood to apply to victims of CSE were also present in the CSE offenders. This further emphasises the need to recognise the risk factors early and identify appropriate support. Work is ongoing to further develop the profile and the understanding of risk factors so work interventions and support can be targeted appropriately. Information from the profile will be used to inform the multi-agency action plan that guides the work of the Delivery Group.

## **4. Phoenix Protect Team**

4.1 This is a well-established multi agency team which has a dedicated focus in relation to child sexual exploitation. Improving practice and standards within the team has been a focused priority since October 2016; this reflects updated national guidance alongside a need to refresh and update the operating model and guidance covering the Phoenix Protect Service. Over the past few months a significant amount of changes have occurred within the Protect Team. These have taken place largely as a result of Quality Assurance audit and performance activity carried out jointly between GMP and MCC. These have included the following;

- Joint Social Care and Police audit of in excess of 400 young people and children's file to review our response collectively and to ensure robust safeguarding was in place. Actions and recommendations were followed up and tracked.
- Single agency audits and reviews.
- Increased and improved use of and focus on performance data and reporting and development of a 'Protect dashboard'.
- Tracking and monitoring timeliness of interventions.

4.2 As a result of these activities a number of improvements have been made these include:

- A new referral, screening and decision making process is now in place.
- Young person's profiles and case planning has been developed and implemented. This is particularly important for children who go missing.
- New process for individual case planning through Protect Team around the Child ((PTAC).
- New guidance and practice standards issued. These include timescales, recording and assessments of children. These are measurable and will be reported monthly.
- Risk management and disruption planning for Adults who pose risks to individual children and children within the wider community.
- Improved manager's oversight, decision making and supervision.
- Clinical Supervision for all staff to support resilience.
- Training for all staff on the effect of Trauma and effective interventions.
- Development of child's voice and evaluation feedback system for measuring impact and asks the "so what" question.

4.3 The Protect team now has access to clinical supervision to ensure that staff are fully supported and remain effective in their interactions with children and colleagues. Clinical supervision will focus on the impact on staff of working with our most traumatised children who have been harmed by sexual violence. This is open to all team members including Barnardo's staff.

#### **4.4 Disruption Activities**

A number of agencies are supporting disruption activity and have been involved in the planning and response:

- Police and community safety officers
- Social workers
- Early Help.
- Licencing.
- Fire and Immigration service

4.5 The nature and complexity of this area of practice dictates whilst working within a practice/legal framework services have to be 'adaptive', for example recent activity has involved visits to a number of premises and the gathering of intelligence and issuing of warnings. Police officer's in conjunction with partners from Immigration Enforcement and Trading Standards respond promptly to new intelligence and reacted quickly regarding possible grooming involving a Vape shop and issued warrants.

#### **4.6 Operations**

There are a number of live operations underway including an operation focusing on one individual who has groomed and exploited a number of young girls and women across Greater Manchester. This includes girls within Manchester, and a social worker from Phoenix Protect, is now working full time alongside GMP as part of the response.

#### **4.7. Improvement and Impact**

During 2016 a review and audit of the Protect Team by Children's Social Care and GMP highlighted that improvements were needed in relation to the timeliness of assessments, the quality of recording and interventions for children and young people and evidence of management oversight and supervision. As a result a number of improvements measures were introduced from November 2016 onwards. This included new referrals pathways, strengthened management oversight, new standards and the implementation of a quality assurance framework.

4.8 In order to measure any improvement an audit was commissioned by the 'Protect Board', which was undertaken in March 2017. There was evidence of improvement in the 9 cases audited with improved recording, management oversight and timely responses. All cases had supervision and management oversight recorded on the Child's record, both in Children's Services and in GMP. Protect Team around the Child meetings had been implemented and this was evident in the cases.

4.9 All children had appropriate 'flags' on police systems with clear management overview and tracking. All had appropriate decisions made in regards to investigations strategies (where appropriate). The voice of the child was evidence in most police case files and recording. There was evidence of multi-agency working and involvement in all cases. There were some very good practice examples which will be anonymised and used as practice standards for others.



4.10 Although the auditors acknowledge this was a small sample all judged that there was clear evidence that the changes in referral pathways and management oversight had improved practice within the team. What was evident was that the children subject of the audit were better assessed, were receiving a timely service, had needs led plans and better scrutiny of practice by managers.

#### **4.11 Performance and Impact**

Since October 2016 the performance within the team has followed an improved trajectory; with clear evidence of progress and impact.

In October 2016 there were 109 children open to Protect and the children were assessed as low, medium or high risk using the current Phoenix risk measurement score. The associated cases loads were difficult to maintain and as a result significant changes within the team have taken place. Caseloads have been reduced by focussing on children assessed to be 'high risk', who are the most vulnerable children and who are either suffering or likely to suffer significant harm through child sexual exploitation.

4.12 Together with a greater understanding in the role of the Protect Team, collective roles/responsibilities, effective use of 'risk' assessments and management oversight we have seen children better safeguarded and protected. This is evidenced by a reduced number of children requiring the intervention of the Protect Team as evidenced by reduced workloads over the last last few months. In November children with active involvement from the Protect Team reduced to 84, 63 in December, 64 in January 2017 and 38 as at March 2017. However, this has increased In the first quarter of 17/18 with requests for support/intervention showing an upward trajectory and this is being effectively managed by the team.

4.13 The age range for children either suffering harm or at risk of harm through sexual exploitation as shown in the appendix broadly follows National trends. The largest cohort is 14-17 although we have seen children as young as 9 years.

*"Children aged 12-15 years of age are most at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation although , victims as young as 8 have been identified particularly in relation to online concerns." (DFE 2017)*

4.14 There remains an under-representation of males within the cohort of children receiving a service from Protect and this reflects both local and National trends. It is believed that 1 in 3 victims of CSE are boys, yet the rate of reporting and the number of young men and boys open to services remains low. This is being addressed through the Protect Service plan.

#### **4.15 Future developments**

CSE is strongly linked to gang affiliation and often involves a child being trafficked. Missing from Home can be frequent, non-school/college is common within this cohort of children due to chaotic lives, effects of trauma on young people and children inability to regulate their emotions and behaviour. Given the

complex safeguarding issues described, our response needs to take account of poly-victimisation within our work delivered by IGMU, MFH, and Protect. This will be taken forward via the development of a complex safeguarding hub.

#### **4.16 Priorities for 17/18**

These include

- Deliver CSE action plan
- Develop ACT model for implementation in Manchester
- Embed and improve quality of practice and approach.
- Reporting and monitoring children's evaluation of our intervention, impact and changes.
- Design and deliver a consistent, evidenced based response and intervention across complex Safeguarding

### **5.0 Complex Safeguarding Hub**

5.1 The Greater Manchester Review of Children's Services in 2016 highlighted how the concept of a complex safeguarding hub could strengthen existing partnership arrangements by bringing together intelligence, triage, interventions and a relationship based model to more effectively respond to complex safeguarding vulnerabilities. In addition, reviews of the Phoenix Protect Service and Integrated Gang Management Unit (IGMU) were undertaken in 2016 by the lead for Challenger Manchester and the Project Manager for Phoenix Services in Greater Manchester.

5.2 The reviews reported back in November 2016 and highlighted the need for change. The reviews stated that the operating model in Phoenix Protect should be refreshed and that IGMU as a concept was now outdated. The reviews recommended refreshing the approach as the problem IGMU was originally set up to address had changed i.e. gang activity was now replaced by threats to life (TTL), organised crime groups and county lines activity. County Lines is increasing issue where vulnerable children and young people are exploited in order to facilitate the running of street level drug dealing.

5.3 The review recommended we should think along the concept of complex safeguarding and consider the learning from the DfE Innovation work piloted by Wigan and Rochdale in relation to CSE and the emerging work in relation to a complex safeguarding hub.

5.4 We are actively progressing the implementation of the Achieving Change Together (ACT) model of practice. This practice model was one of the first innovation projects funded by the DfE Innovation Fund and published an initial evaluation in March 2017. The project brought together national research, local learning and improved outcomes in relation to CSE. The model will deliver an enhanced social work model in relation not just to CSE but other vulnerabilities and we are being supported by colleagues in Greater Manchester who have already implemented this practice model to look at implementation in Manchester.

- 5.5 To ensure our approach to change reflected a partnership approach and reported into clear governance structures a Complex Safeguarding Hub Steering Group was established in May 2017. This group is chaired by the Strategic Head of Early Help and is a partnership group with clear terms of reference to oversee the design and implementation of a complex safeguarding hub in the City of Manchester. The purpose of the group is to:
- To oversee the review of complex safeguarding provision in Manchester
  - To agree the vision for future complex safeguarding provision in Manchester
  - To oversee and drive the development and implementation of a complex safeguarding hub in Manchester, aligned with a proposed hub and spoke model in Greater Manchester
  - To identify good practice and progress the activity required to implement models in Manchester.
- 5.6 A number of sub groups have been established to progress the development of the hub including a design group, a demand and analysis group, a workforce development group, an accommodation group and a group looking at dependencies such as the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub), and other reform developments. In view of the multi – agency nature of the work there is a strong focus on IT and data requirements and communications. GMP have released a Detective Inspector to work full time on developing the hub model and this officer is working closely with MCC and partners to oversee the work of the hub.
- 5.7 A complex safeguarding hub would involve services currently based at Greenheys Police Station potentially being relocated to new accommodation. This strengthened partnership approach would enable mapping of complex vulnerabilities; it would provide a strong assertive outreach and social work engagement model based on the Achieving Change Together (ACT) ACT principle.
- 5.8 The current priority is outline the scope and vision for a complex safeguarding hub and this will be completed end by the end of July 2017. The design work stream will then progress the detail and oversee a design and implementation plan. The hub has the potential to transform our partnership response to complex safeguarding vulnerabilities and is an opportunity to ensure children and vulnerable adults are at the centre of our approach and response.

## **6.0 Summary**

Members are requested to note the scale and pace of the work covering CSE and complex safeguarding and the emerging nature of new areas of vulnerability. This requires a strong partnership approach underpinned by clear leadership to champion and ensure our joint activity to safeguard and protect our most vulnerable children and adults delivers the outcomes and impact that is needed. The establishment of a complex safeguarding hub will strengthen the

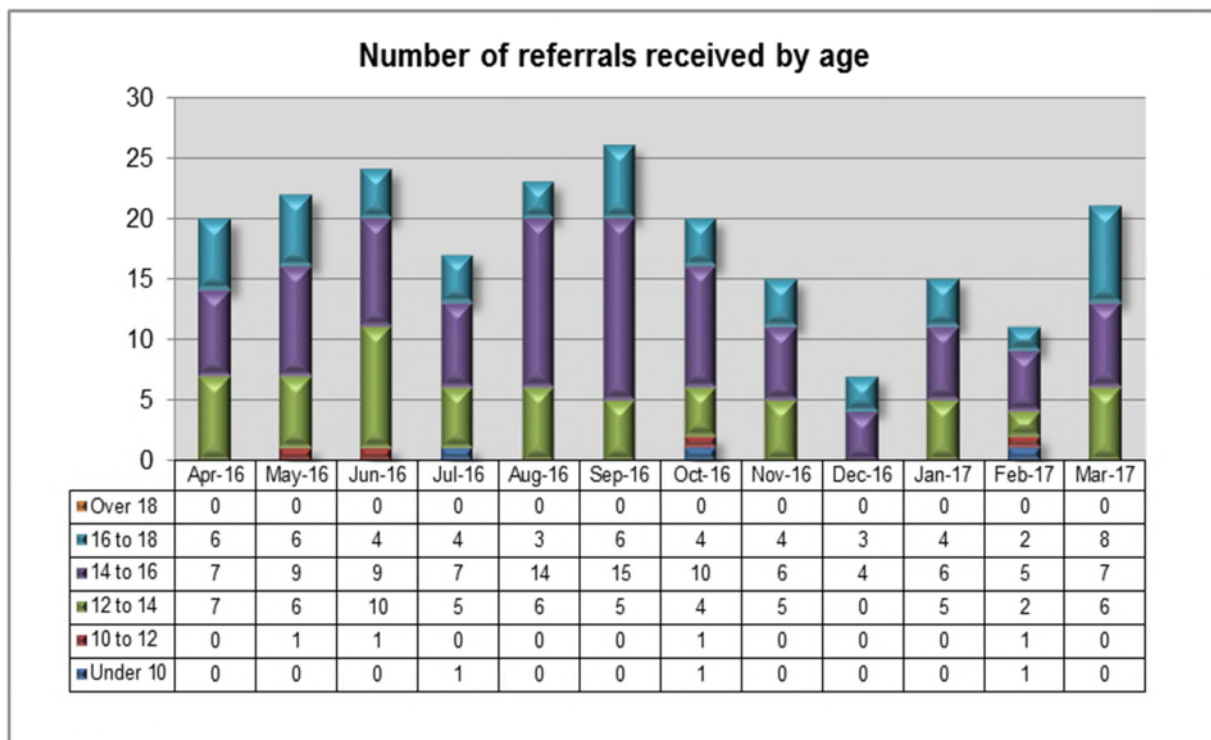
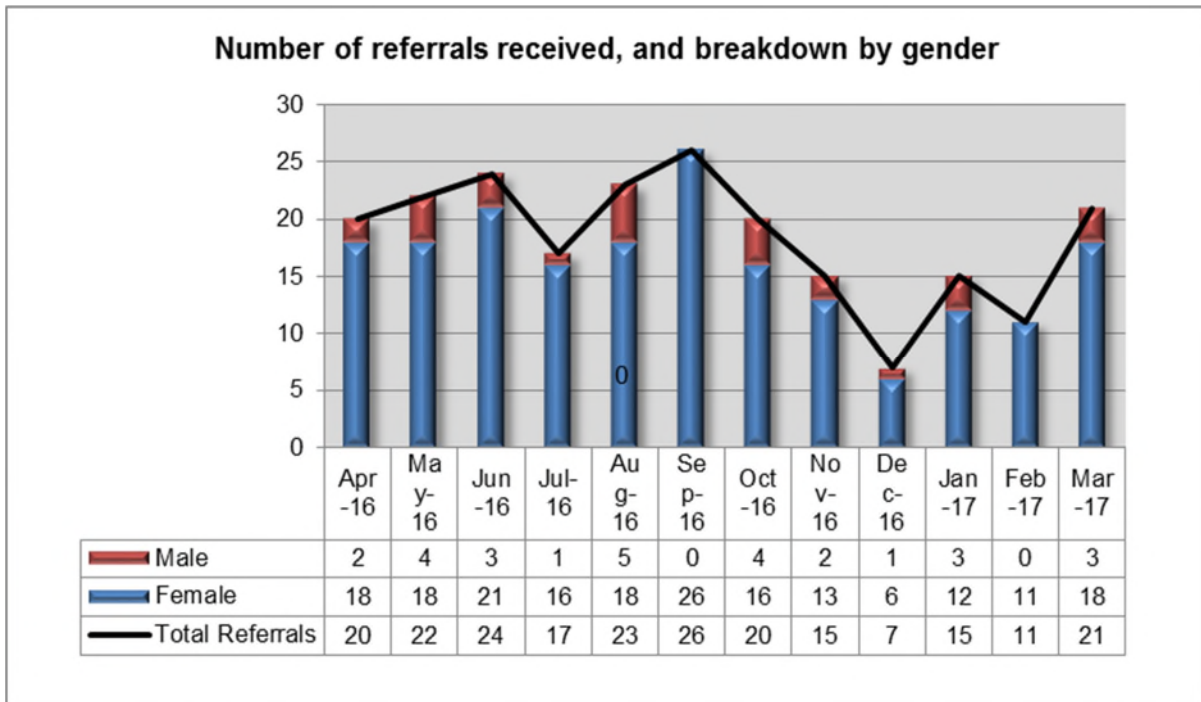
existing response, will draw on a strengths and relationship based model of social work and will enable an earlier and more effective intervention

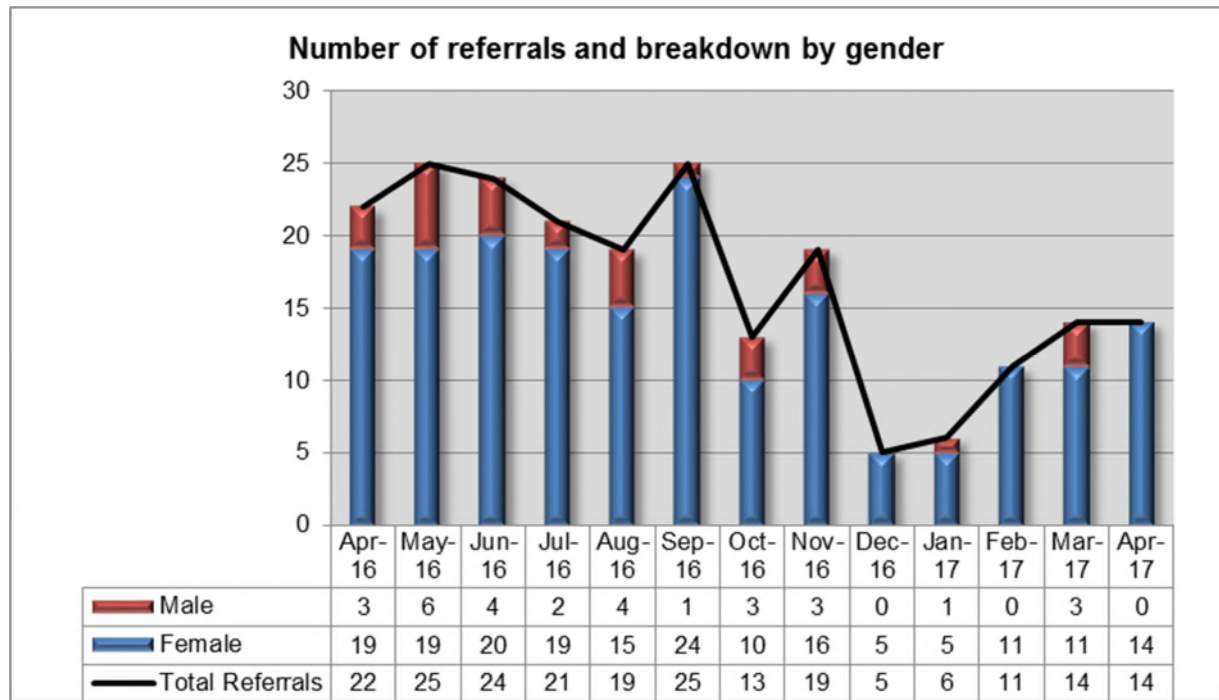
### **References**

Coffey, A (2017) Real Voices: Are they being Heard?

DfE (2017) CSE: Definitions and guide for practitioners and local leaders and decision makers to protect children from CSE.

**Appendix: 1. Phoenix Protect Data April 6 – March 17**





## 2. Case studies:

### Child 8

Child 8 was referred to Protect Team in November 2015 and the team has worked with her since this time. Child 8 has just recently turned 18 years old and is now much more settled, she has changed the group of people who she associated with and has been able to reflect upon her experiences and realise what has happened to her. The Social Worker spent a long time trying to engage Child 8, who, initially refused to see the Social Worker. Child 8 would swear at the Social Worker who, initially was not able to undertake any direct work regarding CSE or mention the word "grooming" "harm" "protection" without Child 8 becoming angry. Child 8 expressed a mistrust of the police and would not speak to them until she began working with her Social Worker who has gradually built her trust up with police officers within the Protect Team.

Eventually Child 8 began to share valuable intelligence with the police about her and other children's experiences. She has now acknowledged she has been involved in exploitation and trafficking whereas before Child 8 was unable to recognise her abuse together with a lack of trust and confidence in those around her to protect her.

Child 8 in a recent meeting stated that:

*"Her social worker has always being there for her, no matter what I did to she would not go away but kept trying, she trusts her social worker and she has saved her life."*

## **Child 7**

Child was referred to Protect in January 2017 as he has been missing from home on many occasions. He was assessed as high risk. He was associating with adults who posed a risk to him and other children and was known to frequent local CSE hotspots. There was several indications that this child was being exploited including drugs misuse, internet grooming and criminality.

To date the social worker reports that her approach was to slowly build a trusting relationship with Child 7, seeing him at regular intervals and when he wanted to see her. This was sometimes three times per week, phoning in-between time to ask how his day had gone, being flexible in responding to requests for support from him and his family.

The Social worker now reports that the risk to Child 7 is low. He has gained significant insight to abusive and exploitive behaviour after the work that has been undertaken been completed with him. There are no current reports of missing from home since engaging with Protect Team. He has successfully completed his referral order and has not been in trouble again with the police. His relationship with his parents are much improved. He still enjoys seeing and meeting with his Social Worker whom he says

*“She’s always there and I trust her, she really cares about me “.*