

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 19 July 2023

Subject: Annual Report of Complex Safeguarding Hub

Report of: Strategic Director of Children and Education Services

Summary

The attached 4th annual report for the Complex Safeguarding Hub (CSH) and presentation summarises the partnership arrangements in place in Manchester to respond to children at risk of exploitation, including practice model, governance and assurance activity.

In addition, key performance and assurance data articulate the progress and impact of the CSH in Manchester, which includes establishing a ‘trusted relationship’, increasing the stability of a child’s homelife, engagement with education/training and reducing incidents of them going ‘missing’; all of which are risk indicators. Feedback from children and case studies examples are provided throughout the full report and presentation to illustrate the work of the Hub.

is over the past year and focuses on an analysis of this data alongside quality of practice and outcomes achieved by young people and the wider impact. Partnership updates are provided demonstrating the joint approach taken.

A summary of progress against key priorities is included and the next steps with a clear rationale for the forthcoming year.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:-

- (1) Recognise the partnership activity undertaken by the multi-agency Complex Safeguarding Hub over the past year to respond to children at risk of exploitation.
 - (2) Comment on the effectiveness of the governance arrangements that support the outcomes achieved by young people.
 - (3) Critically comment on both the analysis of disproportionality and the action already taken in response to this.
 - (4) Endorse the proposed priorities for 23/34.
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Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

None

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

The Complex Safeguarding Hub is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion within our service delivery and recruitment. We are committed to identifying and responding to concerns in relation to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and understanding the impact they have on children in our communities. The report highlights trends in relation to disproportionality and action taken to redress noting the need for further work on this.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Effective support for children at risk of exploitation is critical to enable them contribute to and access a thriving and sustainable City.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The complex safeguarding hub through its trusted relationships model aims to protect and support young people to reach their full potential
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Working with and within our communities to create opportunities for early identification of exploitation and enhance preventative offers is a critical part of the work of the CSH.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Improving outcomes for children at risk of exploitation in our city helps build and develop communities.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	As a partnership we constantly strive to deliver good outcomes for children at risk of exploitation and match children to opportunities to promote aspiration and the achievement of positive outcomes benefitting children, community and the city.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Contact Officers:

Name: Paul Marshall
Position: Director of Children's Services
Telephone: 0161 234 3804
E-mail: paul.marshall@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Karen Green
Position: Strategic Lead Complex Safeguarding
Telephone: 079716211043
E-mail: karen.green@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Susan Butlin
Position: Assistant Director – North & Complex Safeguarding
Telephone: 07507 876867
E-mail: susan.butlin@manchester.gov.uk

Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

Complex Safeguarding Annual Report
[Manchester Complex Safeguarding live.docx](#)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report summarises the key headlines within the Complex Safeguarding Hub (CSH) Annual Report, highlighting the activity undertaken and delivery and impact of the multi-agency approach and practice model.
- 1.2 The report provides detail of internal and external review of the effectiveness and impact of these arrangements, and an analysis of the performance of the CSH including demographics of children referred for support and outcomes achieved for children. Further to this the report identifies our approach to and priorities for continuous improvement. Finally, there is a focus on how the CSH responds to children reported missing.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The CSH was launched in 2018, building on previously established GM wide partnership arrangements between GMP and Social Care to respond to concerns of child sexual exploitation (CSE) via the Protect model. Following a review of this within GMCA, the 10 Greater Manchester LAs with GMP and Health committed to setting up co located and delivered Complex Safeguarding teams in each local authority area utilising to respond to complex safeguarding concerns, defined by Greater Manchester Complex Safeguarding Team as describing *'criminal activity or behaviour associated to criminality involving vulnerable children and young people where there is exploitation and/ or a clear or implied safeguarding concern'*. This strengthened the approach by embedding the joined-up arrangements and information sharing processes and widening the scope of the teams to all forms of exploitation children may be subject of.
- 2.2 Since launching in 2018 we have seen significant activity related to children at risk of criminal exploitation and those at risk of serious violence within the community. The hub also leads on the response to children who are reported missing from home and care, in recognition of the evidence-between linking children going missing and exploitation.
- 2.3 The CSH is intelligence led and adapts and responds to changing trends and patterns of exploitation based on an analysis from our referrals and other sources of information and insight. The service is informed by a developing understanding of trauma and vulnerability to exploitation, with a focus on ensuring children receive the right intervention at the right time. Good connectivity across the partnership is essential to getting this right and therefore awareness raising, guidance and training is a key part of the work of the CSH to enable the identification, assessment and delivery of support for victims.
- 2.4 The CSH is co-located at Greenheys Police station. The staffing structure is detailed in full in the annual report but consists of a specialist social work and police teams, a senior safeguarding nurse, a dedicated Early Help Team, a

Trusted Relationship Clinical Psychologist and a Missing from Care Team commissioned to The Children's Society and a Missing from Home Team. There are also strong links with Youth Justice, who attend each daily risk meeting, and Adult Social Care who have a worker from the Adult MASH linked directly into the CSH.

- 2.5 To deliver a high-quality response for children who are at risk of exploitation, the CSH uses a practice model focused on preventative work, assessment informed by information sharing resulting in coordination of bespoke packages of support. Preventative work includes awareness raising and the provision of support and guidance and training. Our Early Help and Missing from Home and Care teams provide support to children and families who may not have a social worker but there may be some indicators of exploitation. Children referred into the CSH are discussed in a daily multi agency meeting with these discussions informing decision making. The social workers undertake assessments of risk of exploitation which support a greater understanding of factors that may be impacting on vulnerability. Social workers plan a programme of work with children, bespoke to their needs and wishes. Interventions are child led, trauma informed and focused on the development of a trusted relationship. The CSH model is effective in ensuring good joint information sharing and planning with a focus on disruption of perpetrators for each child we work with. Police and social workers collaborate on identification of opportunities to disrupt exploitation for each child, and joint operations are utilised in more complex situations - examples of these joint operations are detailed within the Annual Report and have been effective in responding to investigations relating to multi perpetrator or multi victims.

3.0 Governance

- 3.1 There are robust governance arrangements in place that both support and scrutinise the performance of the service, this is demonstrated in the accompanying slides and are supported internal activities such as professional supervision, case formulation by psychology, the services' monthly insight into practice report and the service wide Quality Assurance Framework. Joint governance meetings take place within the CSH every 6 weeks where effectiveness of joint work is scrutinised and learning shared. The Manchester Safeguarding Partnership has an oversight and challenge role with an established partnership group reporting into the Childrens Executive Group and to the Accountabilities and Leadership board of the Safeguarding Partnership.

4.0 Scrutiny

- 4.1 The CSH is subject to an annual external review; this review is led by Greater Manchester Complex Safeguarding, the last one took place in August 2022. The review found a continued strength in partnership working and practice. This included social workers' knowledge and insight of young

people's strengths and vulnerabilities, their adaptability in responding to children, their passion and positivity and use of strengths-based language. Reviewers found workers challenged other professionals to advocate on behalf of the young person and their family, recognising the complexity of their needs and the impact this had on their ability to engage with expected activities/daily tasks. Reviewers challenged the use of language that could provoke victim blaming responses. They also noted good examples of joint working with Police to plan visits and disruption activity to cause minimum disruption to the young person and family. Joint supervision with locality social workers was evident in the recording and planning and there were good examples of workers working flexibly to reduce number of professionals involved with a young person.

- 4.2 The OFSTED ILAC inspection carried out in March 2022 commented positively on the inspection report which was published in May 2022, stating 'Children who are being exploited or at risk of being exploited, and those who go missing from home, are supported from an early stage. Their risks are promptly identified, and support is provided through the complex safeguarding hub. Children are supported to build effective relationships with workers, and this contributes to assessments that are mostly thorough and inform children's plans. Direct work is helping some children to understand risk, although this is not always reflected in the child's written records. Workers in the complex safeguarding hub maintain a focus on reducing risk for children, and work well with other professionals when the child is not ready to engage in direct work.'

5.0 Need

- 5.1 The need for a service from the CSH has remained consistent with last year, with 242 children referred in 2022/23, comparable to the previous year where 240 referrals were received. 60% of referrals related to concerns around child criminal exploitation (CCE), 22% involved child sexual exploitation (CSE) and the remaining comprised of various forms of multiple exploitation, including threats to life and harm caused by serious violence.
- 5.2 The annual report contains a detailed analysis of the demographics of children referred into CSH and highlights trends within this – of note is disparity between gender with 72% of all referrals being for boys being referred in due to CCE concerns and 28% girls where primary concern is CSE. We further noted that we have limited referrals into CSH for Black dual heritage and minority ethnic girls into CSH leading to a requirement to better understand why exploitation risks are not consistently identified for these children. To respond to this, we are working with Afruca on the Phoenix Project which will be engaging this groups of girls in 1:1 and group work. We have also been using forums such as Week of Action and engagement sessions with partners to highlight this concern and raise awareness.

5.3 We also note generally lower referrals in relation to CSE and again are working with partners to highlight this and provide advice, support and guidance to support early identification of this type of exploitation for all children. While 48% of children open to Hub at end of year were ages 15/16 we have seen an increasing trend of young children being at risk, with 6% of children open 11 and 12 and 2% under 11.

6.0 Impact

6.1 Outcomes achieved by children at point of closure to CSH are an essential mechanism of assessing the effectiveness of the intervention and support young people received. In 22/23 we have seen positive outcomes across our measures – 73% had re-engaged with education, employment or training, 91% were living in stable accommodation, 90% had formed at least one positive relationship and 60% had seen missing episodes reduce. This data, alongside outcomes from our governance arrangements and feedback from children, parents and partners provides assurance that the work being undertaken in the CSH is effective and supports better outcomes for children.

6.2 Feedback is important for our learning and to enable us to develop the service in a child centred way. We aim to gather feedback from all young people we work with. The feedback rate from children was improved this year and we gathered this for 73% of closures; this was 53% in 2021/2022. The feedback demonstrates the positive impact intervention has had and examples of this are contained within the full report, along with the outcomes children have achieved, highlighting the positive impact this will have on their current circumstances as well as their futures. The accomplishments hold great significance for these young people many of whom have endured trauma and adverse childhood experiences.

7.0 Missing from Home

7.1 We have seen a rise in reports of children missing from home and care - in 22/23 there have been 4958 missing reports in relation to 1381 children, a rise from the previous year where there were 4280 reports linked to 1353 children. We have a robust structure in place to ensure all missing children receive an effective and timely multi agency response including review of missing children in daily risk meetings, daily updates from GMP, and multi-agency Missing from Home Panels operating in each locality and within Cared for Children Service. Each child reported missing receives an offer of an Independent Review Interview (IRI) and the information relating to their missing report is reviewed by our Advice and Guidance Service.

7.2 There were 2976 IRIs carried out during 2022/2023 and timeliness of return interview is good with overall 73.22 % of IRIs were completed within 72 hours. Where there are delays this is purposeful and due to either children's circumstances (for example being in hospital, custody or missing again) or to

provide best possible response to a child – for example to visit children at a time that they have suggested works best for them, or to ensure the IRI is carried out by a worker they already know and are happy to meet with. We have seen good examples of exploitation risks and other safeguarding issues being identified through IRIs leading to an immediate safeguarding response and the teams are the subject of audit, dip sampling and a bimonthly peer audit to provide assurance of quality of response and share learning.

8.0 Priorities and Next Steps:

- 8.1 Our priorities are identified through analysis of a range of measures including, but not limited to, performance and trend data, understanding of need issues from internal and external audit and critique of practice.
- 8.2 We require to develop our transitions panel and track outcomes for young people who receive support via this pathway. We will ensure that this is a young person-led panel where young people's voices are central to decision-making and the development of the service.
- 8.3 We require to further develop our approach to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and have well developed thoughts and actions around this.

9.0 Summary

- 9.1 The data, quality assurance activity, feedback from young people and partners provides assurance that we are achieving change for children and raising aspirations for our children and there are some good positive outcomes achieved by our children often in the face of trauma, difficult living situations and impact of inequity in our society. We know we always have more to do, and this is reflected in our priorities for the year ahead. We aspire to be innovative and creative in our work with children in our city.

10.0 Conclusion

- 10.1 The year ahead holds great promise as we continue our journey towards creating a safer, more inclusive, and supportive environment for young people. We are proud of the progress we have made and the positive impact we have had on the lives of our children. With our continued commitment and collaborative efforts, we are confident in our ability to make a lasting difference and empower young people to thrive and reach their full potential.

11.0 Recommendations

- 11.1 The Committee is recommended to:-

1. Recognise the partnership activity undertaken by the multi-agency Complex Safeguarding Hub over the past year to respond to children at risk of exploitation.

2. Comment on the effectiveness of the governance arrangements that support the outcomes achieved by young people.
3. Critically comment on both the analysis of disproportionality and the action already taken in response to this.
4. Endorse the proposed priorities for 23/34.

12.0 Appendices

Complex Safeguarding Annual Report 22/23
PowerPoint Presentation for Scrutiny July 19 2023