



Child Sexual Exploitation - Pan Sussex Strategy

The Sussex Strategy to combat Child Sexual Exploitation has been agreed by all the agencies involved in Steering Groups in the 3 local authorities. The strategy informs the action or business plans of each steering group and LSCB which are in turn reviewed by the steering groups and scrutinised by the LSCBs.

The strategy covers all the areas of action which need to be addressed but each local authority will have its own priorities in the current LSCB business plan and its own plan to meet assessed need. This does not diminish the overall commitment of all services across Sussex to combat child sexual exploitation but reflects the differing presentation of CSE across the area.

All three LSCBs working with Sussex Police commit to the sharing of information across local authority borders to protect children and prevent abuse.

Prevention

- Scope the size and nature of the problem across Sussex, and ensure that changing patterns are recognised and the assessment is updated.
- Awareness raising and preventative education to equip children and young people with the skills they need to make safe and healthy choices and to avoid situations which put them at risk of child sexual exploitation.
- Ensuring children and young people know who they can turn to if they are worried, need advice or support.
- Awareness-raising for parents and carers so they are aware of the risks, understand the patterns of abuse, know about key indicators and where to access advice and support.
- Awareness-raising in communities – geographic, communities of interest, faith communities, businesses etc.
- Awareness-raising and training for professionals working in universal, targeted and specialist services, including a focus on known risk factors.

Disruption

- Joint police and social care operations, including viable operations to ensure perpetrators know that we are aware of the grooming and exploitation and are taking action
- Issuing Child Abduction Warning Notices (aka "harbourers warning").
- Proactive use of legislation to challenge and confront inappropriate behaviour, including:
 - Anti-Social Behaviour Orders
 - Risk of Sexual Harm Orders
 - Sexual Offences Prevention Order
- Using legislation to enforce/prevent children accessing certain premises, businesses or individuals
- Using housing legislation to close down premises used for the purposes of CSE
- Targeting taxi drivers who knowingly transport vulnerable young for the purposes of CSE (including revocation of individual tax drivers licences)
- Visible policing in areas where child sexual exploitation is known or suspected to be taking place
- Trigger plans to deal with any street contact with victims or suspects
- Target hotels that knowingly accept bookings where vulnerable young people are part of a group using a room (this could include a review under the Licensing Act)

Protection and Support

- Identifying suspected perpetrators and reducing dependency on victims' statements, through information sharing, local intelligence, surveillance and proactive joint operations
- Working closely with the Crown Prosecution Service to secure convictions
- Providing effective support for victims and children who are at risk of becoming victims, and for witnesses during and after court proceedings
- Developing methods to reach reluctant victims and witnesses
- Cross border multi-agency cooperation and sharing of intelligence
- Quality assuring and advising on Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) interviews with suspects of CSE

- Ensuring that a monthly meeting chaired by a senior manager considers intelligence about children who are missing regularly and/or at risk of sexual exploitation and makes decisions about how to reduce risk.
- Ensuring a multi-agency risk assessment and preventative plan is in place for all children identified as being abused through, or at risk of CSE
- Ensuring decisions about the use of child in need plans, child protection plans or entry to the looked after system are timely and appropriate
- Ensuring placement decisions for looked after children are based on a clear assessment of need and the CSE risk assessment and that where a cross boundary placement is being considered the risks of such a placement are fully assessed
- Ensuring that all services understand the issues and barriers for children and young people in engaging with services and that the service response will be as flexible as possible in order to encourage engagement
- Visible policing in areas where CSE is suspected
- The circulation of details of potentially vulnerable children to those working in areas where they may be at risk such as neighbourhood police teams, youth and community workers etc.
- Ensuring on going services and support to children and young people who have been victims of CSE and to their families
- A robust response to any young person suspected of perpetrating abuse which is informed by the Sussex Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures and recognises the needs of the perpetrator and the protection of actual and potential victims.
- Agree clear pathways for practitioners making a referral or seeking advice about CSE (including strategy meetings)

Prosecution

- Identifying suspected perpetrators and reducing dependency on victims' statements, through information sharing, local intelligence, surveillance and proactive joint operations
- Proactive and reactive investigations
- Working closely with the Crown Prosecution Service to secure convictions
- Good multi-agency co-operation
- Providing effective support for victims and witnesses.

- Developing methods to reach reluctant victims and witnesses
- Cross border multi-agency cooperation and sharing of intelligence
- Maximising forensic opportunities
- Quality assuring and advising on Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) interviews with suspects of CSE
- Immediate allocation of resources, utilising partner agencies in live incidents

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