

Notice of Motion (Full Council)

Title of Motion: **Sandwell's Commitment to Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation**

Date of Council meeting the motion is to be submitted to: 22 July 2025

Proposer: **Councillor Natalie Weston**

Seconder: **Councillor Justyna Kordala**

Motion:

Council notes that Sandwell Council and the Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) have taken positive steps to safeguard children, including commissioning regular reviews of practice, recognising children at risk of exploitation, and maintaining a strong multi-agency safeguarding framework. Through these structures, children's services, police, health professionals, education providers, and community organisations in Sandwell have collaborated to prevent harm and support victims. Despite this work, national findings highlight systemic and long-standing failures in responding to group-based child sexual exploitation (CSE), particularly in cases where ethnicity, institutional disbelief, and fear of reputational damage affected justice and protection.

Council further notes that the publication of the Casey Review (June 2025), which found that thousands of victims of CSE were failed across the country, and we welcome the Government's response launching a full statutory national inquiry and accepting all 12 of Casey's recommendations. The Review this includes calls for local authorities to audit historic cases, improve data collection (including offender ethnicity and nationality), support victims more directly, and strengthen community safeguarding approaches.

Council believes that Sandwell must continue to show leadership by both acknowledging its progress and stepping up its response considering the national inquiry.

Council further believes that every child deserves safety, and every survivor deserves justice, healing, and access to long-term support, and that multi-agency safeguarding must remain robust, transparent, and open to scrutiny, particularly when dealing with historically under-reported or misunderstood forms of abuse.

Council reaffirms its commitment to learning, listening, and acting ensuring that Sandwell remains not only vigilant in its safeguarding responsibilities, but bold in its pursuit of justice and protection for every child.

Council therefore calls on the Leader and Cabinet to consider –

1. Establishing Child Exploitation Taskforce, working with survivors, professionals, faith and community leaders, and young people to shape a borough-wide response to group-based CSE.
2. Commissioning an independent local audit of historic group-based CSE cases, in collaboration with West Midlands Police, Sandwell Children's Services, and the National Crime Agency, to ensure that no victims were denied justice due to institutional and cultural failures.
3. Working to ensure that all safeguarding partners in Sandwell are collecting and reviewing data on offender demographics, including ethnicity, gang association, and repeat patterns, and that this data is used transparently to inform local interventions.
4. Initiating a borough-wide awareness campaign by supporting this motion and increase public understanding of grooming, victim-blaming, and how to report concerns safely."