

Slough Borough Council

Report To: Slough Health and Well-being Board

Date: 5th December 2024

Subject: Two emerging themes from Slough Safeguarding partnership

Chief Officer: Sue Butcher, Director of Children’s Services

Contact Officer: Betty Lynch, Safeguarding Partnership Manager

Ward(s): ALL

Exempt: NO –

Appendices: [Appendix 1. - Safeguarding Children and young adults from exploitation strategy] To Follow
[Appendix 2. -Ministerial letter re Street Homeless people.] To Follow

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This paper explains two highlights emerging from discussions at Slough Safeguarding Partnership that are relevant to the business of the Health and Well Being Board,
- a) The strategy for safeguarding children and young adults from exploitation
 - b) Street homelessness.

This report describes the context around the Safeguarding children from exploitation strategy.

The safeguarding partnership independent scrutineer will present on the issues emerging around people who are street homeless in Slough.

Please indicate which priority in the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, [Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2020 – 2025](#), your report links to:

Priority 1 – Starting Well	Priority 2 - Integration	Priority 3 – Strong, Health and Attractive Neighbourhoods	Priority 4 – Workplace Health
X	X	X	

1.2 Consideration:

- Information
- Discussion
- Decision
- Endorsement

Recommendations:

1.3 The Health & Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

- a) Consider the contribution it can make to the Slough Safeguarding Partnership strategy for tackling risks and harms from exploitation faced by children, young people and young adults.
- b) Consider the contribution it can make to providing multi-agency support, in terms of governance, leadership and operational work to people who are street homeless

Reason:

- 1.4 Approaching both issues involves multi-partnership understanding of them and clarity about the role and purpose of each partnership in relation to them. The main partnership bodies involved are the Safeguarding partnership, The community safety partnership (Safer Slough partnership) and the Health and Well Being Board.
- 1.5 The Safeguarding Partnership is preparing to publish a safeguarding practice review in response to the tragic homicide of a young adult in Slough in September 2023. This review, and learning established from it has informed the strategy.
- 1.6 The strategy includes up-to-date evidence from local, regional, and national reviews, and is informed by learning from the review of Criminally Exploited Children, chaired by Professional Alexis Jay CBE, published March 2024.
- 1.7 The strategy demonstrates how partners in Slough commit to collaboration in our response to the needs of children, young people, and young adults. The strategy lays foundations for a step-change, so that the professional and general community are empowered to safeguarding all children and young adults from exploitation.
- 1.8 In relation to Street Homelessness, recent government guidance indicates the need for a representative of street homeless people on the Safeguarding partnership board. This was discussed at a recent board meeting where it was agreed that, there is a need for a discussion around multi-agency governance that includes but goes beyond the role of the safeguarding partnership and includes prevention, early intervention, long term support and health and wellbeing issues.

2.0 Report

2.1 Safeguarding children and young adults from exploitation.

2.1 Tackling violence and exploitation are a key focus for Slough Safeguarding Partnership and Safer Slough partnership. The exploitation of children, young people and young adults is a complex type of abuse that takes different forms. The definitions below are in summary form only for brevity in this report. Further information and related definitions are included in the strategy.

- **Child criminal exploitation** is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child, young person or vulnerable young adult to undertake an activity which constitutes a criminal offence. In England there is currently no statutory definition of child criminal exploitation (written as CCE).
- **Child sexual exploitation** is a form of child sexual abuse. This abuse occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person or vulnerable adult into sexual activity. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual.
- **Human trafficking** involves the recruitment, harbouring, movement of receiving of children or adults for exploitation using threat, force, fraud, or the abuse of vulnerability.
- **Modern slavery** is the common 'umbrella' term for all kinds of slavery, trafficking, and exploitation, involving children and adults.

Background

2.2 While the safeguarding practice review was in progress, partners have agreed to the proactive development of a strategy, with four key priorities, in direct response to the emerging learning from the review. These priorities have been developed and agreed by partners via the Slough Safeguarding Partnership Board – partners, council departments, police, health, education, and others – with the aim of laying strong foundations for an effective safeguarding response to all children, young people and young adults who are exposed to risks and harms from exploitation.

3.0 Implications of the Recommendations

3.1 Health and Wellbeing Board and Partners Implications

- 3.1.1 Consider the contribution it can make to the Slough Safeguarding Partnership strategy for tackling risks and harms from exploitation faced by children, young people and young adults.
- 3.1.2 Consider the contribution it can make to providing multi-agency support, in terms of governance, leadership and operational work to people who are street homeless

3.2 Equality implications

3.2.1 Key areas identified in learning from reviews and audits are around the following pre-disposing factors:

3.2.2 Children with Adverse childhood experiences, such as those living with domestic abuse, violence, and/or parental mental health and substance misuse issues.

3.2.3 Children of black and mixed-race heritage including those who are dislocated from their cultural and ethnic heritage.

3.2.4 Children with Special Educational Needs- particularly those with neuro-diverse issues and learning disabilities.

3.2.5 These groups are disproportionately affected as they are especially vulnerable to being exploited by criminals.

3.3 Environmental implications

None

3.4 Financial implications **[Discretionary]**

None

3.5 Legal implications **[Discretionary]**

None

3.6 Risk management implications

There is evidence to support local community and professional concern about the risk of harm to children and young adults outside the home with two fatalities occurring in 2022 and 2023 from fatal stabbings of young adults. A multi-agency strategy reflects partners commitment to working together and finding new ways of working to mitigate risk to young people, emphasising key priority areas for action and also agreeing on the need for prevention, linking in with early help initiatives, to mitigate risk long term as well as short term.

3.7 Procurement implications

None

3.8 Workforce implications

The strategy highlights the need for a whole systems multi-agency workforce development strategy. Some of this will involve the Early help, Safeguarding and Community safety partnership working together to establish appropriate competencies and professional confidence in the workforce. Core to this is the importance of trauma informed and relational practice.

3.9 Property implications **[Discretionary]**

None

4 Background Papers

4.1 Contextual safeguarding strategy document.

4.2 Ministerial letter re street Homelessness.