

# **Southend-on-Sea Borough Council**

## **Report of Deputy Chief Executive for People**

### **to Cabinet**

**on  
19<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

Report prepared by: Ruth Baker  
Head of Children's Service Transformation

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### **Joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to child sexual exploitation, children associated with gangs and at risk of exploitation and children missing from home, care or education in Southend-on-Sea**

#### **People Scrutiny Committee**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Helen Boyd  
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)**

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#### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet with background summary of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection findings and to advise of the action being taken in relation to the findings.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes the report.
- 2.2 That progress against the action plan is reported to Cabinet for assurance in the Journey of the Child Annual report.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 Between 19 and 23 March 2018, Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), HMI Constabulary and Fire & Rescue services (HMICFRS) and HMI Probation (HMIP) undertook a joint inspection of the multi-agency response to child sexual exploitation, children at risk from gangs and exploitation and children missing from home, care and education. The JTAI was a joint inspection of children's services, Essex Police, the National Probation Service, the Community Rehabilitation Company, Youth Offending Services and Health providers. 16 inspectors inspected services over the course of 3 full days spread over 4 days with formal feedback on the fifth day. The inspectors were from Ofsted, HMICFRS, HMIP and CQC. Ofsted were the lead inspection agency.

The inspection included a 'deep dive' focus on the response to children and young people experiencing these vulnerabilities.

- 3.2 The joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) included an evaluation MASH+. In this JTAI, the evaluation of MASH+ focused on children presenting with the type of vulnerabilities which were the focus of the deep dive.
- 3.3 The inspection team also considered the effectiveness of the multi-agency leadership and management of this work, including the role played by the LSCB (LSCB).
- 3.4 The formal letter from the inspection was published on 9<sup>th</sup> May.
- 3.5 The inspectors' feedback reflected our view of the progress we have made against our improvement plan and the areas of challenge that we have identified.
- 3.6 There were no areas for immediate action identified by the inspection team.
- 3.7 During the inspection the inspectors identified no children who were unsafe.
- 3.8 The letter identifies a number of areas of strong practice including our response to children at risk of both criminal and sexual exploitation, the relationships between practitioners and young people, management oversight and decision making, the tenacity of practitioners, the Council's commitment to improving outcomes for children including the investment made in the services, the development of the adolescent intervention and prevention team, our use of performance information and our strategies relating to workforce development, recruitment and retention. In total the letter identifies 27 areas of strength across the partnership.
- 3.9 The letter identified 29 areas for improvement across the partnership. Of these 9 relate specifically to Council children's services. The areas for improvement identified were all, bar one very minor area, areas we had advised Ofsted were areas of focus for us.
- 3.10 Action is being taken on the areas for development and it is note that two of the areas are relatively easy to address as they relate to minutes of meetings being shared and the structure of a type of meeting.
- 3.11 We will be developing an action plan to address the identified areas for development. This will be completed in conjunction with our partner agencies so that we have a single plan across the children's system. The timescale for the completion of the plan is August however, as detailed above, improvement activity is already planned and being undertaken.
- 3.12 The Deputy Chief Executive, as DCS, will provide Ofsted with a written statement of proposed multi-agency response to the findings in the letter by 18<sup>th</sup> August 2018.
- 3.13 Progress against this plan will then be monitored by Childrens Services Improvement Board, by individual agencies, the LSCB and the Community Safety Partnership.

#### **4. Other Options**

- 4.1 We are required to submit to Ofsted, the statutory regulator, a written proposal of our multi-agency response to the findings of the inspection. We therefore have no other option than to comply with this requirement.

#### **5. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 5.1 Safeguarding children is a statutory duty of the Council and elected members need to be assured that progress is being made against the action plan in order to discharge this duty. This is the reason for the recommendation for the progress against the action plan to be brought back to cabinet in February 2019.

#### **6. Corporate Implications**

- 6.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

- 6.2 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications identified at this time, however, this may change once the multi-agency response to the findings is agreed. At that point full consideration of an additional resources required will be undertaken and Members updated accordingly.

- 6.3 Legal Implications

None

- 6.4 People Implications

None

- 6.5 Property Implications

None

- 6.6 Consultation

We will use the opportunity of the development of the action plan to consult with young people who are currently using the services which were inspected.

- 6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

One of the areas for improvement related to diversity and this will form part of our multi-agency response and action plan.

- 6.8 Risk Assessment

None

6.9 Value for Money

None

6.10 Community Safety Implications

The multi-agency response and progress against the action plan will be taken to the Community Safety Partnership as there are findings which relate to community safety.

6.11 Environmental Impact

None

**7. Background Papers**

None

**8. Appendices**

Southend-on-Sea Joint Targeted Inspection Report.