

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP15/57

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
4 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**SUBJECT: PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE - CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE UPDATE**

SUMMARY:

1. This report provides an update from the Protecting Vulnerable People Directorate in relation to Children and Young Persons, identifying key performance information and any significant operational or organisational issues.
2. There are no significant financial implications to note within this report.
3. The only significant risk implication relates to the funding of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA).

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Accountability and Performance Panel is asked to note the increase in demand involving offences against children.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Child Protection in its widest definition continues to attract close scrutiny through Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), Ofsted, Care Quality Commission (CQC) and other review bodies and inspectorates.
- 1.2 The Constabulary's response to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) was subject to a College of Policing Peer Review in March 2015 and the Effectiveness strand of the HMIC PEEL review in June. Suffolk County Council and the wider multi-agency partnership have been reviewed in July in relation to the identification and management of Child Sexual Exploitation.
- 1.3 It is anticipated that a full Child Protection inspection by the HMIC will take place towards the end of the calendar year.
- 1.4 The Constabulary continues to increase the resources into Child Protection and into policing vulnerability more widely.

Local Children's Safeguarding Board

- 1.5 The Suffolk Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a statutory body with a wide remit to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Suffolk. The Detective Superintendent Protecting Vulnerable People represents the Constabulary at the LSCB. In addition, the Detective Superintendent Protecting Vulnerable People represents the Constabulary on the Executive Committee Serious Case Review Panel, Child Death Overview Panel and chairs the Exploited Children Sub-group.
- 1.6 The core statutory duty of an LSCB is to ensure that there are adequate arrangements in place across agencies to protect children from harm. There are also obligations placed on LSCBs to ensure that the welfare of children is promoted. The work of the LSCB includes:
 - The development of policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
 - Communication and awareness raising;
 - Monitoring and scrutiny of safeguarding and child protection work across the county.
- 1.7 The Constabulary presented its audit under Section 11 of the Children Act in May this year.
- 1.8 The Exploited Children sub-group has recently updated its policy and associated Action Plan in relation to CSE. This follows the four pillars of Preparation, Prevention, Protection and Pursue.

Working Together

- 1.9 The Serious Case Review into the tragic death of Charlotte Cobbold was published in June 2015 and an action plan is now under scrutiny by the LSCB to measure the impact that the recommendations have had on local practice across all agencies involved.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

- 1.10 The MASH is now fully operational and receives referrals in relation to both child and vulnerable adult safeguarding. There has been considerable progress in managing CSE and the recent addition of a multi-agency tasking and coordinating group has enhanced this significantly. Missing persons is now also coordinated from within the MASH and the Constabulary have invested in a Detective Sergeant and Constable to lead on this work.
- 1.11 The next stage of the MASH development will be to align the management of referrals in relation to domestic abuse and honour based violence.
- 1.12 In the twelve month period June 2013 to May 2014 the Multi-Agency safeguarding Hub (MASH), the replacement for the Central Referral Tasking Unit (CRTU), dealt with 13,650 referrals related to child protection. The twelve month figures from the MASH are not available but in the ten month period from September 2014 to July 2015 the MASH has dealt with 20,502 child related referrals. For comparison purposes there has been a 33% increase into the MASH in respect of children for the period January to July when comparing 2015 data against 2014. Approximately 40% of all referrals relating to children are generated by the police.
- 1.13 In the ten months period from September 2014 to July 2015 there have been 770 joint investigations between police and Social Care Services relating to child safeguarding offences, this again is up significantly compared to the 618 joint investigations between June 2013 and May 2014. This would equate to a 47% increase year on year.
- 1.14 The longer term trend remains one of increased referrals. The period post the 'Baby P' Serious Case Review has seen a marked increase in referrals. It was expected that the introduction of the MASH might lead to the long-term reduction in referrals; this has not been observed though the MASH is still in its infancy. The introduction of a 'professional consultation line' is expected to lead to a reduction in referrals.
- 1.15 The percentage of referrals relating to the categories of emotional harm, physical harm, sexual harm and neglect remain in similar proportion to the previous twelve months.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)/Missing Children

- 1.16 The addition of a CSE Coordinator post (constable) linking the MASH, Missing Person management and the operational Human Trafficking and Exploitation (HTE) team, now ensures the early identification of risks associated with CSE.
- 1.17 The Constabulary has led on the development of CSE *aide-memoirs* both for internal use and also for Social Care and Health professionals. This will enhance the ability of front-line staff across all agencies to identify potential CSE risks.
- 1.18 The Constabulary is working closely with Children's Homes to develop an effective protocol to enhance planning for children placed in Suffolk where there are enhanced risks from CSE or going missing.
- 1.19 A strategic assessment for missing persons was completed by the Joint Performance and Analysis directorate (JPAD) in late 2014, and a further profile in relation to CSE has been commissioned.

- 1.20 In the year April 2014 to March 2015 there were 1272 episodes of missing children involving 913 children. This compares to 804 in 2012/13 and 852 in 2011/12. Of these, 246 have been missing more than once.
- 1.21 The Constabulary action plan in relation to CSE is owned by the Detective Superintendent Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) directorate, who is accountable to the Assistant Chief Constable for progress.
- 1.22 The Constabulary has increased resources into CSE and this includes the targeting of on-line facilitated exploitation. The HTE Team, supported by the Joint Intelligence Unit, has maximised the use of technology to target those sharing indecent images of children. Between 1st August 2014 and the 24th July 2015 there have been 170 relevant offences recorded by the Constabulary. In comparison there were 107 relevant offences recorded for the same period for 2013/2014 and 75 for 2012/2013.

Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

- 1.23 In line with the Police and Crime Plan objective of caring for victims and vulnerable people, the Child SARC has now been opened. This facility includes an advanced distraction unit to further enhance the service provided. A Child Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) is now in place and has a full case-load. There is a need for additional ISVA capacity and due to the increased demand anticipated in this report the Detective Superintendent (Protecting Vulnerable Persons) will progress viability options in conjunction with the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 1.24 In the period of June 2014 to May 2015 97 children were referred to the SARC and 74 were examined compared to 62 referrals and 39 examinations for the same period in the preceding twelve months.

2014 Child Protection Review

- 1.25 As part of a continuous improvement programme, Suffolk Constabulary commissioned a review of 30 child abuse investigations.
- 1.26 Of the seventeen recommendations arising from the audit that was carried out in December 2014, eleven have been completed, 4 remain amber and 2 red. The actions that remain either red or amber are related to either multi-agency processes or to the use of the Case and Administration Tracking System (CATS) database which will be replaced by Athena in October 2015.

College of Policing – Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Peer Review

- 1.27 The College of Policing carried out a peer review of Suffolk Constabulary between the 23 and 25 February 2015. Recommendations were made regarding activity that was Police related with others that required a partnership response.
- 1.28 A police action plan has been written and the police related actions are complete. The Assistant Chief Constable and the Detective Superintendent (Protecting Vulnerable People) have met with leaders from Suffolk County Council and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB), enabling partnership work to be progressed through existing multi agency groups such as the CSE subgroup of the LSCB. This ensures that there is clear ownership and accountability with regard to all recommendations from the review.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1 There are no financial implications to note.

3. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

3.1 There is current uncertainty as to whether the Home Office match funding for the two Adult Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) posts will continue post March 2016.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	No
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	No – as no financial implications noted.
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	No – there are no issues likely to impact on either diversity or human rights implications.
Have human resource implications been considered?	Yes – no HR implications identified.
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	Yes – the report makes reference to Objective 4 – 'caring for victims and vulnerable people'.
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	Yes – Both the MASH and SARC are subject to multi-agency governance arrangements.
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	Yes - increase in indecent images of children has been discussed with the Constabulary Corporate Communications department.
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	Yes