

REPORT TO: Children, Young People & Families
Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 9 September 2019

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People and Families

SUBJECT: Joint targeted area inspection of multi-agency
response to child exploitation in Halton

WARDS: All

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To share the findings of the recent Joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of multi-agency response to child exploitation in Halton and its recommendations.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

2.1 Members note the findings and note the requirement to prepare a written statement of proposed action responding to the letter by 2nd December 2019.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 On 25th June 2019 notification was received that the Care Quality Commission (CQC), HMI Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and HMI Probation (HMIP) would be undertaking a Joint targeted inspection of the multi-agency response to children experiencing or at risk of exploitation, including sexual and criminal exploitation, in Halton. Preparation by the inspection team began immediately with the onsite field work taking place between 8th and 12th July 2019.

3.2 As was the case in the Ofsted Focused Visit in July 2019 the different inspectorates do not make a judgement from the JTAI rather a narrative letter sets out their findings, outlines the strengths and sets out the areas for development.

3.3 The different inspectorates evaluated the multi-agency 'front door' for child protection, focusing on children experiencing or at risk of child exploitation. A more detailed review, 'deep dive', was undertaken of seven vulnerable children who were known to be in this situation of concern. Finally Inspectors also considered the effectiveness of the multi-agency leadership and management of this work, including the role played by the Halton safeguarding children board (HSCB) now known as the Halton children and young people safeguarding partnership (HCYPSP).

- 3.4 The inspectors acknowledged that the Senior leaders in the Halton local area partnership “have a clear vision and strong commitment to working together to meet the needs of vulnerable children. You will see that the attached letter sets out the significant areas of strengths identified during the inspection process. There is also a case study which highlights the effective multi-agency response to reducing risk and improving safety for children and young people following the death a young person as a result of knife crime.
- 3.5 The letter also sets out the areas for improvement and illustrates some of these finding with a short case study.
- 3.6 The inspectorates did not identify any areas for immediate action or priority actions. However, as is the case with all JTAs a written statement of proposed action to the findings of the letter must be produced. This must be a multi-agency response and must involve the National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company, Youth Justice Service, the Police, Clinical Commissioning Group and health providers. The statement should set out the actions of the partnership in response to the inspection and where appropriate the actions of individual agencies. This response must be submitted by 2nd December 2019.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Having a strong and robust framework for identifying and responding across all agencies is the key to ensuring that children and young people are safe and protected, and partners are clear about their responsibilities and role in working together.

6.2 Employment and Learning Skills in Halton

None

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Children and young people whose health needs and level of development is potentially compromised are identified early and multi-agency support is in place to support them.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Children who are at risk of harm are identified quickly and services work together to minimise the risk of harm and take action to formally protect children in a timely way.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 All key stakeholders are committed to working together to address the areas of development identified by the different inspectorates. This will ensure a most robust and consistent approach across the partnership to child exploitation in Halton.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Issues arising from a child's equality and diversity needs will inform the decision-making at the point of contact and it will be ensured that the voice of the child is to the forefront.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There are no relevant background documents to this report.