

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children and young people scrutiny committee</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>Tuesday 2 June 2020</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Child Exploitation Task and Finish Group - Outcomes and Recommendations</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Chairperson of the Task and Finish Group</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose**

To report the outcomes and recommendations of the Child Exploitation task and finish group to the children and young people scrutiny committee. The committee will be asked to consider and approve the outcomes from the task and finish group and decide if the recommendations should be reported to the cabinet.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- (a) The committee considers the report and recommendations of the task and finish group: Child Exploitation (at appendix 1 of this report) and determines whether to agree the findings for submission to the executive.**

## **Alternative options**

1. The recommendations proposed in this report represent the outcomes of the Child Exploitation task and finish group. If there are any additional recommendations which the committee feels should be included these can be proposed and voted upon at the meeting.

## **Key considerations**

2. The establishment of a task and finish group to focus on Child Exploitation in Herefordshire was agreed by the children and young people scrutiny committee on 15 July 2019. The task and finish group was established to assess the scale of Child Exploitation in Herefordshire and examine the response of relevant agencies and organisations.
3. The group was formed of six members of the Council and a co-optee from the Children's Society. The group undertook three meetings between November – December 2019. At the initial meeting the group learned about the different forms of Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation and latest data and statistics. The group also learned about legislative responsibilities and statutory guidance relating to Child Exploitation. The second meeting of the group consisted of a witness session at which the group engaged stakeholders, partners and relevant agencies and learned of current projects to address Child Exploitation in Herefordshire. At the final meeting of the group recommendations were discussed and proposed.
4. The recommendations are contained in the final report of the task and finish group contained in appendix 1 and are proposed to the children and young people committee to consider approving for submission to the cabinet.

## **Community impact**

5. In accordance with the adopted code of corporate governance, Herefordshire Council is committed to promoting a positive working culture that accepts and encourages constructive challenge, and recognises that a culture and structure for scrutiny are key elements for accountable decision making, policy development, and review.
6. The recommendations made by the Child Exploitation task and finish group contribute to priorities in the corporate plan to ensure all children are healthy, safe and inspired to achieve.

## **Equality duty**

7. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8. If the committee agrees with the findings of the Child Exploitation task and finish group, the report will need to be considered by the executive and, depending on their decision, due regard will need to be given to the public sector equality duty. The findings of the Child Exploitation task and finish group are intended to support and improve safeguarding arrangements for children. This demonstrates the council's commitment to its duty and the recommendations, if adopted, will improve safeguarding services thereby demonstrating that the council is being proactive in fulfilling its Equality duty.

## **Resource implications**

- 9. This report proposes recommendations to the executive concerning Child Exploitation safeguarding services in Herefordshire. The final recommendations agreed by the children and young people scrutiny committee will be sent to the executive. In considering their response to the approved recommendations, a full assessment of resource implications will be undertaken.

## **Legal implications**

- 10. The functions of the children and young people scrutiny committee include the powers to make reports or recommendations to the executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the executive; and to make reports or recommendations to council or the cabinet on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area.

## **Risk management**

- 11. There are no risks associated with the recommendations and in considering its response the executive will need to assess the risks arising from the scrutiny committee's recommendations.

## **Consultees**

- 12. None

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Child Exploitation task and finish group report

## **Background papers**

None identified