

The Role of Prevent and Disrupt Group to address child exploitation in Herefordshire

The overall purpose of the Prevent and Disrupt group

- ▶ Provide an effective tactical multi-agency response to all forms of exploitation involving children and young people, including care leavers. This includes child sexual exploitation, children missing from home or care, trafficking and modern slavery, criminal exploitation and online abuse.

Prevent and Disrupt group meetings

- ▶ The Prevent and disrupt group meets every month and is well attended by both statutory and non-statutory agencies. We normally have attendance from around 30 different agencies.
- ▶ We discuss hot spots/ places and themes around exploitation.
- ▶ As part of the information sharing process at these meetings, we have some successes in disrupting and protecting vulnerable children and young people.
- ▶ A police intelligence form was created in 2019 that allows agencies to share “soft intelligence” with police that would not warrant a safeguarding referral. Information received from this form feeds directly into the agenda for the meeting each month.

The objectives of Part A of the meeting

- ▶ To gather, share and retain information and intelligence relating to all forms of child exploitation (West Mercia Police).
- ▶ To identify themes in relation to victims, perpetrators and locations and report on these to the Child Exploitation and Missing sub group.
- ▶ To ensure robust multi-agency action plans are in place for identified concerns using the '4 Ps approach' (Prepare, Prevent, Protect, Pursue).
- ▶ To share information with relevant Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and Safeguarding groups.
- ▶ To maintain an effective interface and information sharing with MARAC, MAPPA and MATAC.

Examples of effectiveness...

- ▶ One of these recent successes was following information shared by CCTV. They informed the group that a parking attendant had been approached by two young females saying that a male had been following them, making sexual gestures and asking them to get in his car. The images of the girls were shared with MASH education and the girls identified. They were visited at school by Police and accounts obtained. With the assistance of CCTV and other agencies the vehicle was identified and the driver identified and arrested.
- ▶ In relation to hot spots and places discussed, the locations were fed into 'Op Septre' (a local knife crime and anti-social behaviour initiative)– and local multi-agency patrols targeted these places disrupting criminal activity.

The objectives of Part B of the meeting

- ▶ To review risk management plans for young people assessed as ‘actual’ or ‘significant’ exploitation to identify any additional actions required in order to safeguard the child / young person.
- ▶ To discuss children and young people who are frequently missing.
- ▶ To identify young people for whom a National Referral Mechanism for potential victims of modern slavery (NRM) is required and the appropriate agency to lead on completing the referral.
- ▶ To review the outcome of NRM referrals (reasonable grounds decisions and conclusive grounds decisions).

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- ▶ To identify cases and share evidence for the consideration of a CAWN (Child Abduction Warning Notices) being issued and / or other disruption tactics.
- ▶ To share relevant information in relation to young people deemed 'high risk' who are known to the Youth Offending Service.
- ▶ To share relevant information as appropriate regarding ongoing / planned police investigations as it relates to individual children and young people as appropriate.
- ▶ Identify where concerns indicate that a complex strategy meeting is required.

Examples of effectiveness...

- ▶ In the last year, **five complex strategy** meetings have been convened following information shared as part of this operational group and this has resulted in successful disruption and creative community action.
- ▶ A recent example was a number of young people that were being targeted in the College Green Estate area of Hereford City Centre. There has been a significant decrease in incidents in this area relating to contextual safeguarding. Young people are sharing with professionals they feel safer in this area and that it is not a desirable area for perpetrators due to increased police presence.

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- ▶ During COVID restrictions we were able to share information regarding locations where vulnerable adults were temporarily housed and identify how these may become hotspots for Cuckooing.

Future Planning

- ▶ We are working on a Multi Agency Training Programme to tackle drug use amongst children and young people. The Programme should raise awareness and direct people to support available within Herefordshire. The Programme will be designed to be delivered to children at schools, parents and carers, and professionals.
- ▶ We are also exploring the option of flagging individuals on Mosaic and different recording systems when they are discussed on the Disrupt and Prevent Panel.
- ▶ We are working with the Safeguarding Board to create a Safeguarding Database system that capture and analyse the information shared from each forum which could be an effective tool for our strategy to prevent and disrupt exploitation activities.

Current Children on Risk Management Plan

- ▶ We have 43 children open to the Child Exploitation Team and subject to the Multi Agency Child Exploitation panel

30 - Moderate

13 - Significant

- ▶ Criminal

16

- ▶ Sexual

11

- ▶ Both

16