



**Author/Lead Officer of Report:** Helen Sweaton

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**Report of:** John Macilwraith - Executive Director People

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date of Decision:** 18/03/2020

**Subject:** Our response to Protecting Vulnerable Young People - Contextual Safeguarding Strategy

Is this a Key Decision? If Yes, reason Key Decision:-	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Expenditure and/or savings over £500,000		<input type="checkbox"/>		
- Affects 2 or more Wards		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Which Cabinet Member Portfolio does this relate to? Children, Young People and Families				
Which Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee does this relate to? Children, Young People & Family Support				
Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? (784)				
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>“The (<b>report/appendix</b>) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (<b>insert relevant paragraph number</b>) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i>				

**Purpose of Report:**

For the Cabinet to recognise and respond to contextual safeguarding issues to reduce inequalities and contribute the Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Partnership outcome Priority 5. To develop robust responses to emerging safeguarding issues whilst at the same time ensuring we maintain an effective response to all areas of abuse and neglect.

For Cabinet to agree and support Sheffield's "Contextual Safeguarding Strategy: Our response to protecting vulnerable young people ensuring children and young people are safe and supported to achieve their full potential".

For Cabinet to approve Sheffield City Council's involvement in the Amber Project and the partnership response; Prepare, Prevent, Protect and Pursue to tackle child exploitation.

The Strategy re-affirms Sheffield's commitment to recognising and responding to child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation and the criminalisation of our young people.

**Recommendations:**

To recognise and respond to contextual safeguarding issues to reduce inequalities and contribute the Sheffield Safeguarding Children’s Partnership outcome Priority 5. To develop robust responses to emerging safeguarding issues whilst at the same time ensuring we maintain an effective response to all areas of abuse and neglect.

**Therefore ask the Cabinet to:**

1. Agree and support Sheffield’s “Contextual Safeguarding Strategy: Our response to protecting vulnerable young people ensuring children and young people are safe and supported to achieve their full potential”.
2. Approve Sheffield City Council’s involvement in the Amber Project and the partnership response; Prepare, Prevent, Protect and Pursue to tackle child exploitation.

**Background Papers:**

*(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)*

**Contextual Safeguarding Strategy: Our response to protecting vulnerable young people ensuring children and young people are safe and supported to achieve their full potential.** (See Appendix 1)

<b>Lead Officer to complete:-</b>		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated/additional forms completed/EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Andy Bray
		Legal: Nadine Wynter/Louise Bate
		Equalities: Bashir khan
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	<b>EMT member who approved submission:</b>	<i>John Macilwraith - Executive Director People</i>
3	<b>Cabinet Member consulted:</b>	<i>Cllr Jackie Drayton</i>

4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Decision Maker by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> <i>Helen Sweaton</i>	<b>Job Title:</b> <i>Assistant Director of Early Intervention and Prevention</i>
	<b>Date:</b> <i>03/03/2020</i>	

## 1. PROPOSAL

*(Explain the proposal, current position and need for change, including any evidence considered, and indicate whether this is something the Council is legally required to do, or whether it is something it is choosing to do)*

### 1.1 Context

Sheffield has a population of 578,000 (2017 census mid-year estimate). Sheffield is ranked as the 48<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority out of 152 Local Authorities according to the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation (“IMD”), and the 58<sup>th</sup> most deprived according to the Index of Deprivation Affecting Children (“IDACI”).

In the last 10 years levels of deprivation have increased. Latest data published in the 2015 IMD suggests that the level of inequality has risen in Sheffield with a 10% increase in the proportion of lower super output areas (“LSOAs”) in both the least and most deprived nationally (30.4% in 2010; 33.6% in 2015).

Rates of Children in Need (“CIN”) and children subject to a child protection plan (“CP”) have in the past been lower than those for statistical neighbours and core cities; however, both have continued to increase over the last two years.

Last year 26% of offenders involved in knife crime were under the age of 18.

The majority of these offences were threats, public order offences, common assault, Actual Bodily Harm and attempted robbery. 12% of offences involving young people resulted in cautions, 10% of young people were charged, 4% summonsed and 9% subject to a restorative justice/community resolution outcome. Three of the young people involved in these offences were known to be being exploited by an Organised Crime Group. A total of 146 referrals were received by the Sexual Exploitation Service (SES) between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.

The revised documentation **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)** and **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)** refers to **Contextual Safeguarding**. The term contextual safeguarding refers to our response to understand, assess, and reduce the risk of harm from outside the family home (sometimes referred to as extra-familial abuse).

### 1.2 Background

Sheffield is committed to ensuring all **“Children and young people are safe and supported to achieve their full potential”**. We know that the vast majority of parents, carers, families and communities want the very best for their children.

This strategy builds on our commitment to a culture of partnership working with a focus on prevention so that all families achieve the best outcomes for their children. Working with our communities we will continue to find opportunities to provide earlier support and further improve our service offer to families by sharing and developing good practice.

We acknowledge some young people in our communities are vulnerable to risk from the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online which can feature violence and abuse. These risks for young people are outside of their families. These are contextual safeguarding risks. Young people can experience multiple and complex problems, resulting in their identification and inclusion within specific cohorts. We recognise there is often overlap in these cohorts. This Contextual Safeguarding strategy will enhance the City's approach to safeguarding and should be considered alongside the Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Partnership child protection and safeguarding procedures and other key drivers for the city:

1. Sheffield's Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy
2. Great Start in Life Strategy
3. Tackling Poverty Strategy/ Framework
4. Neglect Strategy
5. Community Safety Partnership Plan

### **1.3 Proposal**

A contextual safeguarding strategy for the city which describes how we will identify contextual safeguarding risk, how we will ensure we deliver services to reduce risk and how we will know we've made a difference. This will ensure children and young people are in a safe environment, know how to keep safe and have help to thrive and grow to achieve their full potential.

## **2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?**

- 2.1 Approval of Sheffield City Council's involvement in the publication of a contextual safeguarding strategy to recognise and respond to contextual safeguarding issues in line with this proposal will reduce inequalities and contribute to the Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Partnership outcome Priority 5. To develop robust responses to emerging safeguarding issues whilst at the same time ensuring we maintain an effective response to all areas of abuse and neglect.

## **3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?**

- 3.1 The Council considered it was not under a legal duty to consult with children and young people and their families (including parents/carers) or stakeholders on this strategy. However as the strategy aims to re-affirm

Sheffield's commitment to recognise and respond to child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation and the criminalisation of our young people, it was considered essential that multi-agency engagement informed the development of the strategy and targeted consultation should be undertaken to inform the equality impact assessment.

The consultation has been undertaken with stakeholders including elected members and targeted young people, parents and carers who have been impacted upon by contextual safeguarding issues.

The consultation asked for views on:

- The advantages and disadvantages of the proposed strategy.
- Whether the strategy is helpful in improving understanding of what contextual safeguarding is.
- Whether the strategy is relevant to people who live and/ or work in Sheffield.
- Whether there is agreement with the young people's partnership pledge.
- Whether the vision, strategic objectives and outcomes are the right ones.

The key document that we consulted on is the draft strategy. The other documents (Pathway into child exploitation services, Multi-agency Service Offer and Delivery Plan) were included to provide additional information to support those responding to the consultation in understanding how the strategy will be delivered and what is hoped to be achieved.

The final strategy has been drafted following the consultation responses.

### 3.2 **Engagement**

Significant engagement with elected members with responsibility for this area, all key partners, young advisors and service users has been undertaken during the development of the strategy.

Engagement, led by the Lead member for Children and Young People, Cllr Jackie Drayton began on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and has involved: Cllr Dawn Dale, Councillors, Vulnerable Young People's Executive Board, South Yorkshire Police, Youth Justice Service, Sheffield City Council Commissioning Inclusion and Learning, Sheffield Futures, Public Health, Sheffield City Council Neighbourhood Intervention and Tenant Support, Sheffield City Council Portfolio Leadership Team, Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Learn Sheffield, Virtual Head Teacher and Chaucer School.

Engagement informed the development of the draft strategy and appendices for consultation.

### 3.3 Consultation

A 2 week consultation exercise was undertaken during the period of Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020. The consultation targeted: All partners reflected on the Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Cabinet Members, Sheffield schools, Sheffield City Council Executive Management Team and targeted young people, parents and carers who have experienced contextual safeguarding issues.

- All schools were emailed with consultation documents (primary, secondary, academies and special schools)
- All key stakeholders were emailed
- Downloadable documents to return via email or post
- Individual meetings and focused group activity led by workers with existing relationships held with young people, parents and carers who have experienced contextual safeguarding issues.
- Representation was received from:
  - South Yorkshire Police
  - Chaucer School
  - Sheffield Health Social Care NHS Partnership Trust
  - Sheffield Teaching Hospital NHS Partnership Trust
  - South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue
  - Coit and Ecclesfield Primary
  - Sheffield City Council
  - Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group
  - Cabinet Members
  - Young people, parents and carers who have experienced contextual safeguarding issues

### 3.4 Young People's Voice

- Young people who have experienced contextual safeguarding risk told us they needed help because:

*"I always used to argue with my mam, I used to get kicked out"*

*"Before... everyone was... like... hostile"*

*"Things... Things were not good"*

*"I used to commit crimes"*

*"Police used to be at my house every day"*

- They told us they understand why those already helping them are involved, but sometimes, when they are not in a good place, help needs to look different.

- The young people told us what this help means the them:

*"Coz.... I don't know... it's more support and what you need init"*

*"Hope"*

- They told us the difference this help made:



*“Now I’m more open”*  
*“It’s all good init”*  
*“I’ve changed my attitude towards people”*  
*“I keep out of trouble”*

3.5 Consultation feedback (see Appendix 2) informed the equality impact assessment and as a result a number of actions underneath the delivery plan. Feedback also resulted in slight amendments to the final document.

## **4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### **4.1 Equality of Opportunity Implications**

4.1.1 Decisions need to take into account the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which identifies the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex and sexual orientation.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) (see Appendix 3) has been carried and highlights that the Contextual Safeguarding strategy will enhance the City’s approach to safeguarding. The EIA notes positive impacts on children and young people of all characteristics who are at risk of adverse outcomes. The enhanced approach to safeguarding will also positively impact on our partners and the voluntary Community Sector across Sheffield.

### **4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications**

4.2.1 No direct financial or commercial implications arise from this report and the strategy is in line with the current business plans. Regular reviews of costs associated with safeguarding young people are undertaken between Children and Families, Business Strategy and Finance. Any changes in the funding requirements for contextual safeguarding services will be subject to a separate report which will need to go through the appropriate approval processes.

### **4.3 Legal Implications**

4.3.1 The legal implications are already set out in the body of the report and in the proposed Contextual Safeguarding strategy. By developing and publishing this strategy the Council will be meeting its statutory duty to put in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people

4.4 **Other Implications**

*(Refer to the Executive decision making guidance and provide details of all relevant implications, e.g. HR, property, public health).*

**5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

*(Outline any alternative options which were considered but rejected in the course of developing the proposal.)*

5.1 Not to approve Sheffield City Council's involvement in the publication of a contextual safeguarding strategy. This proposal was rejected because this strategy will support reduced inequalities and contribute the Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Partnership outcome Priority 5. To develop robust responses to emerging safeguarding issues whilst at the same time ensuring we maintain an effective response to all areas of abuse and neglect.

**6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

*(Explain why this is the preferred option and outline the intended outcomes.)*

6.1 Agreement and support of Sheffield's Contextual Safeguarding Strategy and approval of Sheffield City Council's involvement, to recognise and respond to contextual safeguarding issues in line with this proposal, will reduce inequalities and contribute the Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Partnership outcome Priority 5. To develop robust responses to emerging safeguarding issues whilst at the same time ensuring we maintain an effective response to all areas of abuse and neglect.