

Committee/Date:	9 September 2020 Children's and Families Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Embedding lessons learnt from the Serious Case Review for Child C
Directorate:	Families
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Wards affected:	All
Public Access	Open
Appendices	Appendix One – Local Safeguarding Partners response to review Appendix Two – 7-minute briefing for Child C

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 On the 26 May 2020 the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board (the Board) published the Serious Case Review for Child C, who was 14 years old when he was murdered. He had been criminally exploited.
- 1.2 The review identified 8 findings which are set out below at section 4.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide assurance to this Committee that the Board and its partners are undertaking work, at pace, to embed the recommended changes and make improvements to practice.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the work that has been completed to date and that further details on improved practice and outcomes for children will be available at the end of the financial year.
- 2.2 Members may find it helpful to utilise the resources produced to disseminate lessons learnt, particularly the 7-minute briefing to raise awareness of the review findings and the work being undertaken to address them, with other elected members.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Child C was murdered on January 8th, 2019. The Serious Case Review was commissioned independently and commenced in Feb 2019. It was approved by the Local Safeguarding Partnership (LA, Police and CCG) for the Board on the 7 May 2020. The time delay in completing the review occurred because the reviewer needed to take account of the trial of one of those charged with Child C's murder.

- 3.2 The full report and action plan have been signed off and shared with partners and has been uploaded on the Waltham Forest Strategic Partnership's website, see statutory reviews tab at <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/strategic-partnership-boards>

4. Summary of findings

Please see below a summary of the subject areas of the findings of review together with the agencies responsible for responding to them.

Findings		
Number	Subject	Lead
Finding 1	Elected Home Education	Dept of Education
Finding 2	Reachable moments - initial response. Role and function of the Rescue and response MOPAC service to be clarified. Guidance from Dept of Education and Ministry of Justice for practitioners to be cleared	LBWF, MOPAC, Dept of Ed and Ministry of Justice
Finding 3	Multi-agency case discussions, guidance from Dept of Education to be clearer	LBWF and Dept of Ed
Finding 4	Information sharing between Nottinghamshire Police and other agencies	No rec as system amended
Finding 5	Processing application for school place at Heathcote	No rec as system amended
Finding 6	Initial application for housing and Housings involvement in multi-agency meetings and strategy discussions	LBWF
Finding 7	Information gathering in MASH	No rec as system amended
Finding 8	Contextualised Safeguarding approach	LBWF

5. Action taken to embed learning and improve practice

- 5.1 There are two aspects to this work: improving the practice of individual practitioners; and the development of new services and using resources differently.

5.2 Practice Improvement

- 5.2.1 The redesign of training (resources and approach):

A multi-agency task and finish group (CSC and Wellbeing and Independence are members) has totally re-designed the approach to training and the material used to include guidance on reachable moments and multi-agency case discussion as per recommendations in SCR. The material is very interactive and agile so it can be used in many different settings and time slots. The Safeguarding Adolescent Leads Network is supporting the dissemination of these resources as

well as meeting to provide peer support and sharing of good practice. The Network, made up of practitioners from across the partnership including CSC and WBI, is continuing to grow and now has 60 members and has met 3 times since March 2020. Training sessions have also been delivered virtually and two sessions have already taken place for a total of 84 practitioners from across the partnership. See the new resource at:

https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/PDF_SAFEGUARDING%20ADOLESCENTS%20resource.pdf

5.2.2 A 7-minute briefing has been created which not only provides a summary of the learning it also includes signposting to the many resources available on the strategic partnerships' webpage including bitesize videos, practitioner's guidance, new training resource, victim blaming language video etc. This 7-minute briefing has been disseminated through the strategic partnerships to all partners who have confirmed that they have cascaded throughout their agency. Recent feedback has included" *"Really, well done with these 7-minute briefing notes. They are concise, readily available and so easy to pick-up and discuss in team meetings. I've just used during our weekly staff meeting. Excellent. Thank you so much. Registered Manager of a care home*

5.3 New services/processes developed since Child C's murder

5.3.1 County Lines police reports: all of these now go to the Daily Risk Management Meeting (DRM) in the MASH to start the multi-agency discussion, planning and response at day one.

5.3.2 Operation Harbinger (Golden Hour): Waltham Forest is one of a few London Boroughs that is part of the pilot. Within one hour of a child being booked in at the custody suite, Police contact our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) so information can be shared regarding any safeguarding or welfare concerns which could impact on the child's safe stay in the custody suite which could create a reachable moment.

5.3.3 Urgent response service: normally within 48 hours of a child being identified through the MASH as potentially being at risk of exploitation to capitalise on reachable moment and provide specialists support to the child. 64 children have received a response, almost all within 48 hours of coming to notice, since this service commenced in May 2020.

5.3.4 A Multi-agency, all-age, Exploitation and Risk Panel (ERP) has been developed by merging three existing panels that had oversight of children suspected of being exploited by organised criminal groups, children missing from education, care or home and children being sexual exploitation which supports comprehensive risk assessments in one place with all relevant professionals taking part. There has been an increase of the use and focus on networks in strategy meetings which

is evidenced in cases that are being discussed at the Exploitation and Risk Panel. There has been a significant increased use and focus on the networks that the children are part of, in strategy meetings and the Need2know reports when children go missing. Networks are identified and analysed within a contextualised safeguarding approach. An audit is being planned for later in the year to identify the impact of ERP on outcomes for children, exploring if there has been a reduction in missing episodes and repeat referral to ERP and if more children have been successfully engaged.

- 5.3.5 The Missing Outreach Team (MOT) and Missing Outreach worker (MOW) have been working in different ways with children during lockdown and capitalise on reachable moments. These reachable moments when the family are at home during lockdown has enable the team to offer advice support and help to reduce missing episodes in the future. An example of the work they have completed:

“A young person who regularly was going missing before lockdown due to gang involvement and CCE, since lockdown a number of telephone calls and video calls to him and the family, enabled the worker to advocate on their behalf and they were moved out of the area to keep the whole family safe.”

- 5.3.6 The MASH has been bolstered through a dedicated new Youth and Family Resilience practitioner to facilitate information sharing with YOS and provide additional advice and support at the first point of contact.

- 5.3.8 We have strengthened the work within the Leyton custody suite through additional investment from the Mayor's Violence Reduction Unit and are exploring opportunities to work with legal colleagues in relation to the support and advice they give to young people in custody so that more reachable moments can be created.

- 5.3.9 For family's needs housing related support due to violence and exploitation we have developed closer working between the all-age Exploitation and Risk Panel and the Social Needs Panel, and a workshop for housing officers to increase understanding of the issues so to improve the quality of referrals to the Social Needs Panel. For family's needs housing related support due to violence and exploitation we have developed closer working between the all-age Exploitation and Risk Panel and the Social Needs Panel, and a workshop for housing officers to increase understanding of the issues so to improve the quality of referrals to the Social Needs Panel.

5.4 Changes in the pipeline

- 5.4.1 A video is being developed and designed by young people affected by exploitation for practitioners on reachable moments and drug debt bondage.
- 5.4.2 We are in the process of developing a new pathway from Whipps Cross Hospital into the MASH to provide direct support to people presenting at Emergency Dept. affected by violence.
- 5.4.3 We are in the process of refreshing the joint assessment agreement with housing through MASH strategic group to embed joint working with housing. Monthly meetings are now taking place between housing and MASH to discuss any issues and aid collaborative work.

6. Equalities and Diversity - Issues related to race disparity, intersectionality and Adultification

- 6.1 All actions to address the findings of the Child C review are part of the action plan for Adolescents Safeguarding and Resilience Strategic group, reporting to the WFSCB. This action plan is now being reviewed through a lens of the intersectionality of race, class and gender, to ensure that the needs of Black children, particularly, but not exclusively, Black boys from poorer families are being met. This may require different or additional actions for different children to ensure that all children have the best possible outcomes.
- 6.2 We always focus on working on seeing children as children first but we have spoken less about the issue of Adultification where we not only perceive children as adults, but also find it difficult, as practitioners to really put ourselves in their shoes and experience the world as they do, as children. The strategic group will address this issue in September and again review the guidance we are providing for staff.

7. Action to address national policy issues

- 7.1 WFSCB received the following response from Dept of Education, Ministry of Justice and Home Office to the findings regarding Elected Home Education, Working Together guidance and national system for responding to children who are arrested and detained away from home.

“We will be reviewing the content of the guidance and identifying other areas for improvement to safeguard vulnerable children and prevent such tragedies in the future.

The Home Office is investing significantly to strengthen the response of Government. In 2020/21 this includes a £20 million package of activity to increase the law enforcement response, expand the National County Lines Coordination Centre, fund a dedicated British Transport Police

county lines taskforce, and increased specialist support for children, young people and their families who are affected by county lines exploitation. This will include a rescue element to ensure that children and young people can be safely returned home and that opportunities are seized to support them to safely escape from county lines dealing.”

- 7.2 Presentation of the review to the London Safeguarding Children Board Executive: the independent Scrutineer for the WFSCB presented the SCR to the Executive, which included officers from MOPAC, and this led to a discussion about the need to take forward the findings on a Pan- London basis. We are awaiting further details from MOPAC.

8. Conclusion and next steps - How will we be assured changes have been made, how are we testing if practice has changed

8.1 Improved practice will look like:

- More National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referrals being made for children being criminally exploited (CCE)
- Succinct care plans for children at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation and/or CCE influenced by the relevant professionals at the new all age Exploitation and Risk Panel.
- More children will take up support offered through the increased number of reachable moments through police custody, emergency dept at the hospital, missing outreach, and urgent response through MASH. This is to be captured in end of intervention surveys completed through CSC.
- Continued increase of identifying networks and use of contextualised safeguarding toolkit by CSC, resulting in plans for child targeting the right areas of risk and intervention.
- Practitioners reporting through the practitioners network an increase in confidence and understanding about contextualised safeguarding approach.

8.2 Assurance: WFSCB will use a range of tools to test out if the learning has been embedded and practice has changed. For example:

- Feedback from children and families at the end of intervention about the quality of the support offered
- Single agency (CSC, Health, Police etc) and multi-agency audits
- Surveys and focus groups with practitioners
- Feedback through our multi-agency practitioners' network.

8.3 We would welcome the opportunity to return to the Committee in six months' time to provide further details of the progress of work and share the findings of audits and provide further feedback on improved outcomes.

