

## Findings from the MAQuA 'Deep Dive' Child Sexual Exploitation Audit - FINAL

As part of the 2016/17 GSCB Business Planning process it was agreed that the Multi Agency Quality Assurance (MAQuA) Sub-Group of the GSCB would undertake a 'deep dive' audit into Child Sexual Exploitation to consider the impact of multi-agency working and evidence how the findings from the previous multi-agency CSE audit in 2012 were translated into action and the impact that this has had.

CSE remains a priority area of focus for the GSCB and through this audit the GSCB is aiming to strengthen its shared understanding of CSE in order to highlight best practice and provide healthy challenge where needed to help ensure that local need is met.

This report sets out the findings from the audit, which was led by DI Bob Heywood, Annette Blackstock, Named Nurse for Safeguarding (CCG) and Alison Croft, GSCB Business Manager. The audit was well supported by Emma Lane, GSCB Business Support Officer. Can we express our thanks to everyone who contributed to this piece of work, either through the online survey, case file audit or focus group.

Can we also express our thanks to the young people from Dean Academy, Newent Community School and Tewkesbury School who participated in this work and whose views are incorporated within the report.

### Methodology

The methodology used for this deep dive involved triangulating a number of different types of information:

- 1) **Findings from a Multi Agency audit of 8 CSE cases** to analyse the quality and impact of multi-agency identification and intervention. This was done by taking a sample of cases drawn geographically from across the 6 Districts and involving children of different ages. The cases were all children and young people who were known to the Multi-Agency CSE Team.
- 2) **Learning from the experience of practitioners (online survey)**, an electronic survey was sent out via a GSCB alert and hard copies were also made available at the annual CSE Conference that took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> July. Practitioners were asked to complete a short survey based around their knowledge and experience of CSE in Gloucestershire. Practitioners were also asked to indicate whether they would be interested in attending a focus group to enable a wider discussion to take place.
- 3) **Learning from the experience of practitioners (focus group)**, a focus group session took place with 8 practitioners using a restorative approach. Professionals at the focus group considered their experiences of multi-agency CSE working, including strengths and challenges and what needs to happen next from a systems perspective.
- 4) **Learning from the views of children and young people**, 3 schools were able to work with us and held workshop style lessons with a group of year 9 students to explore their understanding of CSE, what they feel are the risks and what they would do if they thought that they, or a friend were being exploited
- 5) **Consideration of contextual information** led by the GSCB Business Unit Manager, which included governance arrangements, findings from Inspections and Peer Challenges, performance data as well as multi-agency documents (GSCB CSE Protocol and CSE Strategy).

A strength in the audit methodology was that all these different types of information have allowed a large number of practitioners to be involved in the audit which has provided a 'window' into the

system, in terms of both quality of practice and impact. A limitation was that it was not possible to speak directly with the young people whose case files were being audited. However, in a couple of cases the audit group were able to speak with the young person’s outreach worker, which was really helpful in being able to gain a better understanding of what life is like for the young person and their views/experiences.

The focus of the audit was on professionals’ knowledge and understanding of Child Sexual Exploitation and evidencing the impact of multi-agency working on improving outcomes for children and young people. The focus did not specifically take into consideration disruption activity and bringing perpetrators to justice and this may wish to be considered when scoping audits in the future.

**Context**

At the time that the CSE audit was undertaken in 2012, the Screening Tool was being run as a pilot. Since this time the CSE Screening Tool has become embedded and a multi-agency CSE Team has been put into place. The number of referrals received by the Multi-Agency CSE Team have increased year on year. The increase in the number of referrals being made evidences an increased understanding amongst professionals of the risks to children and young people and the action that needs to be taken to help keep them safe.

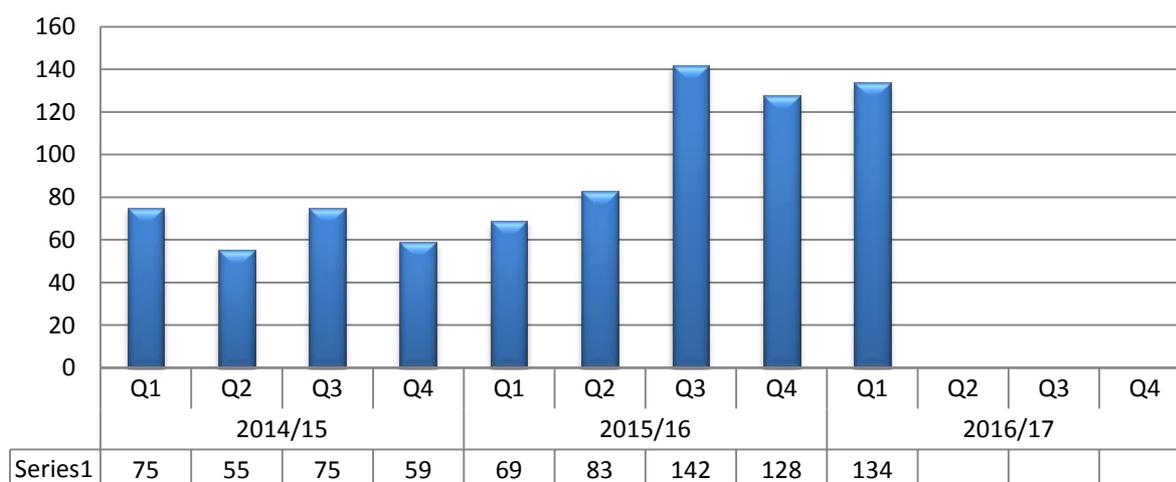
**Performance Data**

There were **134** CSE referrals recorded in Q1 2016/17, an increase of 6 compared to the **128** that were recorded in Q4 2015/16.

CSE referrals are above the figures reported in the same period during 2015/16 and it is predicted they will continue to grow year on year as the awareness increases in the county.

The intelligence picture is increasing and agencies are looking to increase the data sharing with regards to Missing and CSE with a view of being able to proactively identify victims and suspects to safeguard and actively peruse/disrupt.

**Number of CSE Referrals Reported to the Police**



The largest % of referrals are made by the Police.

In relation to the nature of the exploitation, the assessed exploitation model was not available in 35% of the cases. Where it was known, the largest number related to online safety, followed by inappropriate relationships. 86% of young people being exploited are female

The latest performance data indicates that there are currently 342 'exploiter' persons of interest and of these 38.9% have been arrested for CSE offenses. 97% of 'exploiter' persons of interest are male.

## **GSCB CSE Training**

The multi-agency Child Sexual Exploitation training was revised during 2015 and developed into a full day's training rather than a half-day training course. This allows additional time to incorporate key messages, national guidance and the arrangements in place locally around CSE. The course benefits from the local practitioners who are speakers on the training and who actively work with CSE cases; Police Officers (CSE team) Social worker (Team manager) and Youth Support, Youth Engagement Workers (CSE team).

In addition to the face-to-face training there are also 2 CSE e-learning courses which are promoted by the GSCB. One for professionals, which is accessed through Kwango and one for parents which is provided by PACE (Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation).

During 2015/16 the GSCB ran 13 multi-agency CSE training courses to 205 delegates. Delegates were asked to complete a pre/post course evaluation at the end of the training course and were also sent a 3-month post course evaluation to complete.

99% of delegates completed the pre/post course questionnaire; of these:

- 95% (5% didn't answer the question) agreed that the objectives of the course were achieved
- 95% (5% didn't answer the question) felt that the training was well presented
- 94% (6% didn't answer the question) said that it made them think/challenge what they do

Qualitative feedback included the following quotes:

**"The training was extremely informative and useful. My work as a social worker with young people is directly related to young people at risk of CSE. Shortly after my training I was working with a young woman who I was concerned was being exploited. Thanks to my training I knew what process to follow and a swift visit was arranged with a police officer from the CSE team". (feedback included on the 3-month evaluation questionnaire)**

**"I have since changed my position to become an Independent Reviewing Chair and chair Child in care Reviews and Child Protection Conferences. On at least one occasion, I have added a decision for SW to run the CSE screening with regard to a young person potentially at risk of CSE"**

**"Really excellent training and I am so much more aware about this whole area since attending"**

**"I have found it easier to more openly discuss my concerns with a young person regarding their safety/exploitation. I have not had to complete the form recently but have done once in the past."**

**"Excellent training and an interesting insight into CSE in our county and having the police and youth workers there gave a different perspective."**

## Chelsea's Choice

Since 2012, Gloucestershire has commissioned a theatre company called Alter Ego to deliver the play 'Chelsea's Choice' to Year 8 students across the county. The production, which lasts for 40 minutes, tells the story of three students who discover the diary of a girl called Chelsea. Chelsea is a young girl who, having fallen out with her friends and family, was approached by a man called Gary. Gary was older, owned a car, had a flat and treated her like an adult. Unfortunately Gary was not what he seemed to be! Chelsea's story is then played out and examined by the three students along with their teacher in an attempt to understand what happened to Chelsea and how it could have been prevented. The play is followed by a short interactive workshop session, where the cast talk with the audience and expand on some of the issues explored in the play and answer any questions or concerns that they might have.

Each child seeing Chelsea's Choice is provided with a key ring with details of the CSE web pages specifically for young people in case viewing the play raises their interest or they have concerns. The key ring also includes the Twitter hash tag #wiseupexploitation. Schools have also been provided with a curriculum lesson about CSE to run with the children following the play in case they have further questions. This forms part of the PinK curriculum which details resources available for schools to help teach young people about aspects of safeguarding.

Since 2012, approximately 28,000 children have seen Chelsea's Choice and participated in the workshop. Each year a % of the audience are asked to respond to a number of statements in relation to their awareness of the issues raised. In 2015, all secondary schools apart from one engaged in the performance and 5,460 young people saw Chelsea's Choice, of which 500 were asked to take part in the survey. Their responses are shown below:

	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
I now have a better understanding of Child Sexual Exploitation and the different forms it can take	99.5%	0.5%
I now have a better understanding of 'The Grooming Process' and how it is used to trick, trap and manipulate people into being sexually exploited	98.2%	1.8%
I now have a better understanding of 'Safe Internet Use' and why I should keep myself and my personal information safe online	98.9%	1.1%
I now have a better understanding of what makes a 'Healthy Relationship'	98.6%	1.4%
I understand that 'Grooming' and 'Sexual Exploitation' can happen to young boys as well as girls	99.4%	0.6%
I am aware that the process that Gary used on Chelsea is not the only way that 'Grooming' and 'Exploitation' can work. It can be done by men, women, boys and girls. It can be done by individuals, as well as groups and gangs	99.6%	0.4%
I would recommend watching 'Chelsea's Choice' to other young people my age	99.2%	0.8%

Although only a proportion of those young people who watched Chelsea's Choice were asked to take part in the survey, the results really do highlight the benefits to young people in terms of increased awareness and understanding of the risks and issues.

A play entitled 'Crashing', which raises awareness of boys as CSE victims was showcased at the GSCB CSE Conference in July 2016. This was an extremely powerful production and the company has been commissioned again to show the play at each of the annual Designated Safeguarding Lead Forums for schools running in September and October 2016. Plans for how it could be made more

widely available are currently being considered. A Cyber Safety programme which raises awareness about internet safety is available in primary schools and is aimed at younger children. This includes an interactive Pantomime commissioned by the GSCB jointly with the Police called In The Net. Schools are required to evidence their early help offer in relation to CSE through the annual S175 audit process.

### **CSE Conference 2015 and 2016**

In collaboration with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the GSCB ran a CSE Conference on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2015. 150 people attended the event which included presentations from the CSE Team, Children's Social Care and Youth Support. The event also saw the launch of 'Friend Request...' which is an OPCC funded short film about CSE in Gloucestershire, featuring local people and locations. The film is intended as an introduction to provoke and encourage open discussion about the subject. It is based around a powerful poem by a local survivor of CSE and many of the ideas and themes within the film originated from the young people who were consulted whilst it was being produced. The conference and film generated considerable local media interest, with features in BBC Points West, ITV West, BBC Radio Gloucestershire, The Breeze radio station, Heart FM radio station, Star radio station, The Gloucestershire Echo, The Gloucester Citizen, The Forester, Stroud News & Journal, Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard and the Dursley Gazette.

Based on the success of the conference held in 2015, a GSCB CSE/Missing Children Conference was held at Hatherley Manor on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2016. 250 delegates attended this event, which included presentations from the Chair of the GSCB, Missing Persons Coordinator, the CSE Team, Youth Support and Children's Social Care. A performance of 'Crashing' was also shown at the event. The feedback from the event was very positive with 91% of delegates rating the conference either Excellent or Very Good. 98% of delegates said that the conference had increased their awareness of CSE and missing children.

### **CSE Problem Profile**

A problem profile on CSE seeks to draw together all the known intelligence / relevant data held across different agencies to inform strategic decision making and local practice development. It requires collective ownership across all partners to support its development and a committed / effective analyst to review and identify key findings and intelligence gaps. The need for a problem profile and the desire for this to be completed are well documented within the minutes of the GSCB Executive Committee and the CSE Sub-Group and are also highlighted as a potential weakness within the HMIC, College of Policing and Peer reviews completed during 2015. Due to capacity, there have been some issues with getting this piece of work off the ground. It has been agreed that the Police Analyst will lead on this work and the deadline for completion is the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2016.

The regional CSE Problem Profile was produced in 2016 and was created to inform regionalised safeguarding responses to CSE. The regional problem profile is for the South West region, which includes the following police force areas; Avon and Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, Dorset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. It is based on information collected from all police forces and 26 safeguarding partners between November 2014 and October 2015. The regional problem profile highlights that Gloucestershire does not currently have a CSE Problem Profile and that Gloucestershire is the only force in the region to not have an up to date profile. However, it does highlight good practice in relation to Gloucestershire having a dedicated CSE Analyst in place to run a victim identification and risk assessment process.

### **Third-party Assurance Activity**

**College of Policing** - In April 2015, at the request of Gloucestershire Constabulary the College of Policing undertook a peer review of the arrangements to manage CSE. It is important to note that this was a review and not an inspection and that the methodology used was qualitative in nature and individual investigations were not reviewed. The reviewers made 44 recommendations for the

Constabulary to consider, and the findings from the College of Policing peer review were considered by the GSCB Missing / CSE Sub-Group on 19th January 2016 alongside a position statement from the Constabulary's CSE lead.

**HMIC** - Inspections into police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) are conducted by HMIC on a periodic basis. In July 2015 HMIC conducted a vulnerability inspection and considered in depth how forces respond to and support missing and absent children, victims of domestic abuse and how well prepared forces are to respond to safeguard children at risk of sexual exploitation. The inspection collected data and plans from forces, conducted a review of case files and observed multi-agency meetings. The inspectors also worked with the missing person coordinator to review cases of missing, including children considered to be 'repeat absent' and 'repeat missing' and children shown to be at risk of CSE. Overall, HMIC judged Gloucestershire Constabulary as "Requires improvement" with their report published in December 2015 making a number of observations / conclusions. In relation to CSE, HMIC concluded that the constabulary has made its response to CSE investigations a priority and the investment of resources into operations to investigate such offences is evident across the constabulary. However, HMIC also concluded that the constabulary should improve its response to children who go missing, specifically in relation to the assessment of risk, quality of investigation and how it uses subsequently information from 'safe and well' checks.

**Association of Directors of Children Services South West Peer Challenge for Gloucestershire on Missing Children** - In June 2015, a peer challenge was undertaken by Borough of Poole Local Authority and Dorset Police on Gloucestershire's responses to missing children. The reviewers identified a number of strengths including:

- The GSCB CSE Commissioning Strategy undertakes analysis against the principles of See Me, Hear Me and this is a useful approach to include in the strategy;
- Trigger plans are seen as a strength in everyone having quick access to a plan which shares information and allocates roles and responsibilities;
- Examples of independent scrutiny were evident;
- Young Ambassador programme is to be commended; and
- Associations between young people are being mapped to support joined-up risk assessment, planning and interventions.

A number of recommendations were also made, including the production of a position statement/problem profile on missing children and CSE, raising awareness of the Missing/CSE Risk management meetings and increasing awareness of multi-agency protocols.

**Findings: Online Survey Responses**

191 professionals completed the survey from a range of different professionals, working within the public, private and voluntary and community sectors. The largest response was from professionals within the public sector, which accounted for 76% of all responses. The purpose of the survey was to gain an understanding of professional's knowledge and experience of CSE and to compare this to findings from the questionnaire undertaken as part of the CSE audit in 2012.

<b>Knowledge about CSE</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2016</b>
A Little	70%	28%
Quite a Lot	30%	72%
A Lot		

It is positive to see that there has been a significant increase in professional's knowledge about CSE since 2012. In 2012, 70% of professionals felt that they knew 'a little' about CSE, whereas in 2016 72% stated that they knew 'quite a lot' or 'a lot' about CSE.

Similarly to the findings from the 2012 audit, the majority of professionals in 2016 stated that they gained their knowledge of CSE risk indicators from local training or guidance which highlights the effectiveness of local training and awareness raising activity.

Of the 191 questionnaire responses, 129 professionals had not made a referral about CSE during the past 12 months, whilst 54 professionals had made a referral to either Social Care, the Police or both the Police and Social Care. Raw data from 2012 is not available, so it is not possible to compare this with previous responses.

33% of professionals have been involved in responding to a referral about CSE and almost half (49%) of all respondents have supported children and young people at risk of or affected by CSE. These figures help to evidence the range of support that is available to children and young people at risk of CSE.

The questionnaire also asked about the Screening Tool and views in relation to the benefits, challenges and how we could improve partnership work in relation to CSE. Responses included:

Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ good assessment tool to help identify early warning signs               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ provision of clear guidance for professionals</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ can be completed with the child or young person and used to develop a safety plan               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ the same risk assessment tool is being used by all agencies</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ engaging young people who may not be aware of their risky behaviours</li> <li>▪ the length of the form and the amount of time that it takes to complete               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ multi-agency communication and information sharing</li> <li>▪ need better education/awareness raising/training</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Improve Partnership Working
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint working, communication and information sharing</li> <li>• More training, awareness raising, focus groups roadshows etc.</li> <li>• Increase the number of agencies who are part of the multi-agency CSE Team</li> </ul>

Although there were some clear benefits that were identified, with a large number of responses stating that the screening tool is a good assessment tool, there was still a view that the length of the form may put some people off completing it. Another key challenge that was identified was some of the challenges involved with engaging young people, especially those who may not see themselves as being at risk.

In relation to improving partnership working, the need for more training and awareness raising featured strongly in the responses. It is concerning that a number of responses stated that they didn't know what the screening tool was or how to access it.

## Findings: Case File Audit Findings

8 cases were looked at in detail by a multi-agency audit group on behalf of MAQuA. Each agency was asked to review their own case records in advance of the 2-day audit and bring all relevant information with them to the audit. To determine which cases should be reviewed it was agreed that it would be a random sample but should cover different areas of the county and a range of ages. The audit tool was based on the audit tool used in 2012 so that comparisons could be made. The audit tool covered vulnerabilities and risk factors as well as the quality and impact of multi-agency support.

**The table below gives a brief pen portrait of the children whose stories the audit learnt from.**

**Abigail's story** – Abigail is a 15 year old from Gloucester, who lives at home with her mother and older brother. Abigail doesn't always go to school and regularly uses drugs and alcohol. The initial screening tool was completed by the GP due to a number of concerns. Support is being provided by a CSE outreach worker due to the high level of risk and the fact that Abigail is a very vulnerable young person. Abigail does not always choose to engage with professionals and finds it difficult to trust people.

**Briony's story** – Briony is a 16 year old from Cheltenham, who has a medical disability. Briony did not initially want to engage with professionals and did not believe that she was in a risky relationship. However, she did eventually feel able to disclose what was happening to her which led to a successful prosecution.

**Charlie's story** – Charlie is a 12 year old boy from the Cotswolds, who lives at home with his mother and younger brother. Since going to secondary school, Charlie has been mixing with older children and spending a lot of time on social media. There were concerns about his relationship with an older girl at school, which led to a CSE screening tool being completed. As a result, early help support was provided to Charlie and his family.

**Della's story** – Della is 15 years old and lives in the Forest of Dean. There were concerns in relation to Della and her wider group of friends that they might be at risk of harm from a group of older males.

**Erin's story** – Erin is 12 years old and lives with her Mother, younger siblings and step-dad outside Cheltenham. Erin does not see herself to be at risk of exploitation, even though she has been in a relationship with an older male. She thinks that it is up to her who she enters a relationship with, irrespective of their age. Erin has quite a difficult relationship with her mother and does not find her easy to talk to.

**Flora's story** – Flora is a 15 year old from Stroud. She hasn't been going to school and has been misusing drugs and alcohol. Flora's mother is really worried about her and the fact that she appears to be in a relationship with a much older male. Initially Flora did not see the relationship as being unhealthy but as a result of the interventions put in place she now understands that she was being exploited.

**Grace's story** – Grace is a 16 year old from Cheltenham who lives with her mum, dad and younger sibling. Grace has a difficult relationship with her both her mum and her dad and was in foster care for a short period of time as she did not feel safe living at home. Grace spends a lot of time on her phone and will talk to strangers on social media.

**Holly's story** – Holly is a 15 year old girl who lives with her mum, dad and siblings in Gloucester. Holly has a difficult relationship with her parents and her school were concerned that she was being prevented from studying at home and also had concerns about forced marriage. Holly is seen as the 'black sheep' of the family and has previously been physically chastised by her mother. Holly has gone missing on a number of occasions and has had periods of not going to school.

## **The Young Person's Situation**

As part of the audit MAQuA wanted to gain a sense of the young person's situation, including the nature of the exploitation, vulnerabilities and risk indicators. MAQuA also wanted to be able to see how the young person saw their own situation and whether they recognised that they were at risk of or being exploited.

All 8 of the young people were living in the family home at the time that the CSE Screening Tool was submitted. Concerns regarding the nature of the exploitation varied in each case but in more than one case there were concerns regarding the exchange of sex or sexual acts for either drugs, money or alcohol. Other concerns included the young person being in a controlling relationship and concerns that the young person was being groomed. In no cases were there concerns that the young person was being either externally or internally trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

There were some themes in terms of the young person's vulnerabilities. Six of the young people had a history of going missing/running away and five had a history of either truancy or poor school attendance. Another theme coming through was either historic or current child protection concerns, which were not always directly linked to the CSE concerns.

7 out of the 8 cases involved relationships with older/powerful individuals which links back to earlier concerns regarding controlling relationships, grooming and domestic abuse. There was also evidence of inappropriate sexualised behaviour and unsafe sexual relationships. Reflecting the national picture, none of the young people initially recognised that they were at risk of, or being exploited. Their view of the situation ranged from "I live my own life and nobody tells me what to do" to one young person being "shocked that male was not being truthful and that she might have been exploited". Another young person said that "he was just a friend that she hung out with; he doesn't make me do anything". This finding clearly links with the findings from the online questionnaire that it can be very difficult to engage with young people as they do not see themselves as being at risk.

## **The Quality and Impact of Multi Agency Support**

MAQuA wanted to gain a real understanding of the quality and impact of multi-agency support through the case file audit. For this reason, the audit tool focussed on the following areas:

- The quality of referral
- The quality of assessment
- The quality of planning
- Effectiveness and impact of information sharing and interventions

### **Quality of Referral**

The audit group considered the following three areas in relation to the quality of referral; was the CSE response timely, did the referral include sufficient detail including the completion of the CSE Screening Tool and did the referral information include clear understanding or analysis of presenting risks. Each case was then given an overall referral judgement rating.

4 of the 8 cases were judged to be 'good', 2 were judged to be 'adequate' and 1 was judged to be 'inadequate'. In one case it was not possible to make a judgement as a screening tool had not been completed due to the fact that the concerns were in relation to a wider group of girls and a multi-agency meeting had been held to discuss the concerns. The inadequate judgement was made because even though CSE was recognised as a concern, there was a delay in completing the screening tool and a lack of robust risk assessment and analysis in relation to the CSE concerns.

The audit group did see evidence of well completed screening tools in terms of the level of detail that had been provided and in some cases where more than one tool had been completed there was

evidence of a more detailed understanding of the presenting risks over time by the person completing the screening tool.

### **Quality of Assessment**

The group considered the quality of the assessment in each of the 8 cases that were being audited. They considered the following questions:

- Has an appropriate professional visited the young person in such a way as to check on their welfare and safety
- Is there evidence that the young person has been engaged with in a way that is appropriate to their age and level of understanding?
- Is there evidence that multi agency assessment of need has taken a balanced view of the risk and resilience?

1 case was judged to be 'outstanding', 4 cases were judged to be 'good', and 2 cases were judged to be 'adequate'. In one case no screening tool had been completed as the concerns were in relation to a wider group of girls who were identified at risk. In this case, a multi-agency meeting had been held, rather than individual screening tools completed.

In the case that was judged to be 'outstanding' there was clear evidence that the young person had been engaged with and their voice was very clear throughout the assessment. There was also a good assessment of behaviour and good involvement by all agencies.

In one case, which was judged to be 'adequate', although there was some evidence of multi-agency work not all agencies had been involved. The school nurse was not involved, although they would have been well placed to provide support to the young person.

### **Quality of Planning**

MAQuA wanted to gain an understanding of the quality of planning and did this by considering the following 3 areas:

- Is there evidence that the planning for the young person's safety has been done by a multi-agency group, with clear outcomes, timescales and accountabilities?
- Has the lead agency working on the plan shared it with other appropriate agencies
- Is there evidence that there is clear process of reviewing progress against the plan, analysing what is happening to the young person and re-setting objectives where required?

Of the 8 cases, 1 was deemed to be 'outstanding', 4 were felt to be 'good', and in 2 cases the audit group judged the quality of planning to be 'inadequate'.

Some strengths observed during the audit were:

- In Flora's case, there was good evidence of multi-agency planning and a good plan with clear outcomes
- For Holly there was good evidence of risk management and a clear, multi agency plan in place. There was a clear understanding of the breadth of the concerns and professionals working with Holly to keep her safe.
- For Charlie, there was an appropriate response to the level of risk which was assessed by the CSE Team to be low risk of CSE.

Areas for Improvement included:

- For Abigail, there was little evidence of multi-agency working until an initial Child Protection Conference took place and information was not shared until the CP Conference. Although there was evidence of Youth Support engaging with the Social Worker, there was lots of

parallel working taking place rather than professionals having a holistic view of Abigail's needs.

- The audit group considered a screening tool that had been completed for Briony in 2014. At the time, there was some sharing of information between Police and Youth Support but no clear evidence of multi-agency working. The audit group were of the view that things have changed since this time and that there would now be a higher level of information sharing with other professionals

### Effectiveness and Impact

It was important for MAQuA to be able to measure the effectiveness of risk management processes and the interventions put in place to support the young person. To do this each case was rated on a yes, no or partial basis.

*Has information sharing to do with this case helped raise awareness amongst professionals of risks to this young person and/or more widely?*

	Yes	No	Partial
Abigail			✓
Briony		✓	
Charlie	✓		
Della			✓
Erin	✓		
Flora	✓		
Grace	✓		
Holly	✓		

It was positive to see that in 5 cases, the audit group felt that information sharing had helped raise awareness amongst professionals of the risks to the young person. They saw good evidence of multi-agency groups and a wide range of professionals involved.

However, there is more work that is needed to ensure that information sharing takes place at the earliest possible opportunity. In Abigail's case, information was not shared with other professionals until the Child Protection Conference which meant that they were not aware of the risks and were therefore unable to put support in place.

*Have Interventions helped the young person identify their own risks and understand how to put strategies in place to help minimise risk?*

	Yes	No	Partial
Abigail		✓	
Briony	✓		
Charlie	✓		
Della			
Erin		✓	
Flora	✓		
Grace			✓
Holly	✓		

It was positive to be able to evidence that in 4 of the cases, the interventions had helped the young person to identify the risks and that they had been appropriately supported to put things in place to help minimise the risk. For Briony, this enabled her to disclose what was happening, which led to a successful prosecution.

In the cases which were rated as 'no' or 'partial' the main theme coming through was that the young person did not see themselves as being at risk. In these cases, there is ongoing work taking place to support the young person but it is too early to say what impact this work has had.

*Have interventions raised awareness of the young person's parents or carers, and are they responding appropriately as a result?*

	Yes	No	Partial
Abigail		✓	
Briony		✓	
Charlie	✓		
Della			
Erin	✓		
Flora	✓		
Grace	✓		
Holly			✓

In 4 cases there was clear evidence that the interventions had raised awareness of the young person's parents or carers and they were fully engaged in the plans to help keep the young person safe. In Abigail's case, there was little evidence that mum was fully engaged and different agencies had different views on mum's ability to protect the young person from harm. The audit group were particularly concerned about Abigail's mum's ability to keep her safe and fed this back to the Social Care Team Manager following the audit so that further action could be taken.

*Have interventions helped to reduce the level of risk to the young person?*

	Yes	No	Partial
Abigail		✓	
Briony	✓		
Charlie	✓		
Della			
Erin	✓		
Flora	✓		
Grace	✓		
Holly	✓		

It was positive to see that in the vast majority of cases, the interventions that had been put in place had helped to reduce the level of risk to the young person. In Abigail's case, it was not possible evidence a reduction in risk as Abigail does not see herself as being at risk and continues to demonstrate a high level of vulnerability and risk taking behaviours. However, she does have a good relationship with the Youth Support Outreach worker who she trusts and who continues to undertake Keep Safe work with her.

### Summary of Reflective Learning

Abigail	There is not yet evidence that the degree of risk is reducing as work is ongoing. Abigail has engaged with a worker from the Youth Support Team but does not see herself as being at risk so doesn't always engage with all professionals. The audit group felt that the persistence from the Youth Support worker is a key strength and also the fact that the case is being worked through as part of the Innovations Pilot. This is a high risk case and Abigail has a significant number of vulnerabilities. There remains a high level of unmet need.
Briony	The audit group chose to look at a screening tool from 2014, which resulted in a disclosure from Briony and a successful prosecution. The audit did show that the level of

	multi-agency working was not as good as it could have been but there is evidence that the support made a positive difference for Briony.
Charlie	For Charlie, there was an appropriate response based on the low level risks identified in the screening tool. Charlie's family were protective and his needs were met through a proportionate early help response. The family were willing to engage and have put things in place to reduce the level of risk. Direct work was undertaken by the Families First Plus Team.
Della	No screening tool was completed for Della as concerns were in relation to a wider group of girls who were identified to be at risk. Instead a multi-agency meeting was held to consider the actions that needed to be taken to reduce the CSE risks. It was not possible through the audit process to consider whether the risk is reducing and whether Della feels that the support has made a positive difference.
Erin	Erin doesn't see herself as being at risk of CSE. As a result of the intervention, Erin's mum has asked for support to help change her own behaviours. It is difficult to say at this stage whether the level of risk is reducing but there are strategies in place for reducing the level of risk and clear evidence of proactive multi-agency work to keep Erin safe. Exceptional work by the Social Worker was evidenced as part of the audit process.
Flora	Flora did not initially see herself as being in an unhealthy relationship but as a result of the positive intervention and partnership working, there are clear examples of how the risks have reduced. Flora has reduced her drug and alcohol use and her resilience and self-esteem have increased. Flora's relationship with her mum has also improved. Flora engaged well with professionals and since the interventions has acknowledged that she was being exploited. There were clear examples of effective working by all agencies to meet Flora's needs and reduce the level of risk.
Grace	The degree of risk to Grace reduced as a result of the interventions that were put in place. Previously, Grace was going missing on a regular basis and these missing episodes have now reduced. Grace's offending behaviours have also reduced as a result of the work that has taken place. It was quite difficult to evidence whether Grace was fully engaged with her plan but there was some evidence of improving relationships within the family.
Holly	Holly was felt to be at high risk of CSE through social media and also a male that she met in the park. As a result of the interventions that were put in place following a high risk planning meeting, the degree of risk to Holly reduced. Holly was fully engaged with professionals and undertook 'keep safe' work with the Youth Support worker from the CSE Team. There is evidence that as a result Holly showed an increased understanding of the risks and was shocked that the male was not being truthful and that she might be being exploited.

### Findings: Professionals Focus Group

A focus group was held with a group of 8 professionals to gain understanding of their experiences using the screening tool and of multiagency working. The group considered the current strengths and challenges as well as what needs to happen next in order to further improve the safeguarding system in Gloucestershire. The focus group consisted from professionals across a range of organisations, including District Councils, Schools, Families First Plus, Children's Social Care, 2gether and Gloucestershire Care Services.

The group was asked to be mindful of the audit principles throughout the session:

- Whether risk is being managed through appropriate services
- Whether service users are being properly engaged
- The effectiveness of the intervention.

## **Experiences of CSE Screening Tool**

Professionals discussed their experiences of using the screening tool and the difficulties of distinguishing abuse, exploitation and CSE, which does sometimes raise doubts prior to completing the screening tool. They expressed their general need for increased confidence and understanding to complete the CSE tool.

Where professionals were confident about a CSE concern, they felt that the screening tool has improved; it is quick and easier to use *without* a scoring system.

After making a referral using the screening tool, it was said that feedback to the referrer varied. Some experienced a long wait to hear back from CSE team, whilst others talked of poor or no feedback after sending a referral and having to chase this up. However, the group also provided examples of 'very good' feedback being received from the CSE team.

## **Experiences of partnership working – with emphasis on supporting the young person**

The group all acknowledged the difficulty of 'sharing' CSE work between agencies, balancing the 'good work' being done and that communication needs to be improved across all partners. Education colleagues felt that access to more information would be helpful.

In terms of working with families, schools and communities, the group stressed the need to begin raising awareness of CSE at Primary School age, including understanding and working with community 'stigma'. It was felt that partners could support changing perceptions and challenge the use of language in schools and communities. An example given was in use of language - intimidating 'consent' given by a child / young person when a child cannot actually consent.

Professionals would welcome advice and training so that they could feel more confident about working with a young person whilst waiting for a response a CSE referral. More resources and guidance would be helpful.

The group felt that there is a clear focus on the child through all agencies, with links between Missing and CSE. Some felt that the child's voice is heard but 'not necessarily listened to'. Professionals mentioned low self-esteem as a common factor. Understandably, the child finds it hard to disclose and needs a *consistent* adult; there can be too many professionals asking too many or the same questions.

Professionals wanted to feel confident that wider family work (eg. whole family and systems interventions) could be considered. Staff said they experience contributory factors linked to risks of CSE, such as substance misuse in parents.

Social media, in terms of increasing risk and exposure to CSE, was seen to be a concern for all agencies.

## **Key challenges**

Relationships:

- Building relationships and trust with young people, enabling a consistent professional / appropriate worker that is sufficiently skilled to recognise and respond to CSE and also to begin supportive work.
- Knowing or feeling that the young person *feels* listened to.

Resources and information sharing:

- CSE team is seen as a good resource - it is small and potentially under resourced.

- Education hold a lot of information but feel they are less involved than other agencies.
- Access to secure email accounts across all agencies.

Raising awareness that:

- CSE is a risk to boys as well as girls.
- Intervention needs to be at primary school age, working with children and education staff.
- Professionals need to be aware of and be ready to challenge perceptions and culture with families, communities and schools.

Social media:

- It is both a mechanism for exploiting children and young people as well as a powerful resource to engage and communicate.

### **Key strengths**

The CSE team is widely perceived as being a strength in itself. The staff are felt to be very helpful, knowledgeable, accessible and supportive despite being a small unit.

Professionals from different partner agencies across Gloucestershire are dedicated to working with children and young people – ‘they want to do the work’.

The Alter Ego productions (Chelsea’s Choice) has been welcomed as an excellent resource, well planned and well accessed by children, young people and professionals. They are felt to have been timely, age appropriate, have a powerful influence and impact on all those that have seen the plays.

Communication through secure email (both for referrals, follow up and advice).

### **Potential Next steps**

Ongoing training but with specific focus on:

- Reporting CSE *and* working with children, young people and their families after referral (keeping safe / managing risks together).
- Early intervention methods and ideas (whole school / community / primary age).
- Considering who will be a ‘lead professional’ – ‘professionals working outside of the box’.

Improve communication:

- Specifically with notification to agencies about concerns as well as feedback from referral outcomes to agencies.
- Consider email alerts to agencies involved.
- Having a centralised data base that all agencies can access securely.
- Consider a joint CSE network (perhaps replicating others eg. Willow Project, Bristol)

Raise awareness of CSE:

- Prevalence in boys and young men.
- Asking ‘routine questions’ about CSE in within any initial assessment, prompting thoughts about CSE risk assessment and possible screening tool.
- Use focus groups and ‘Learning Circles’ for specific cases.

CSE team:

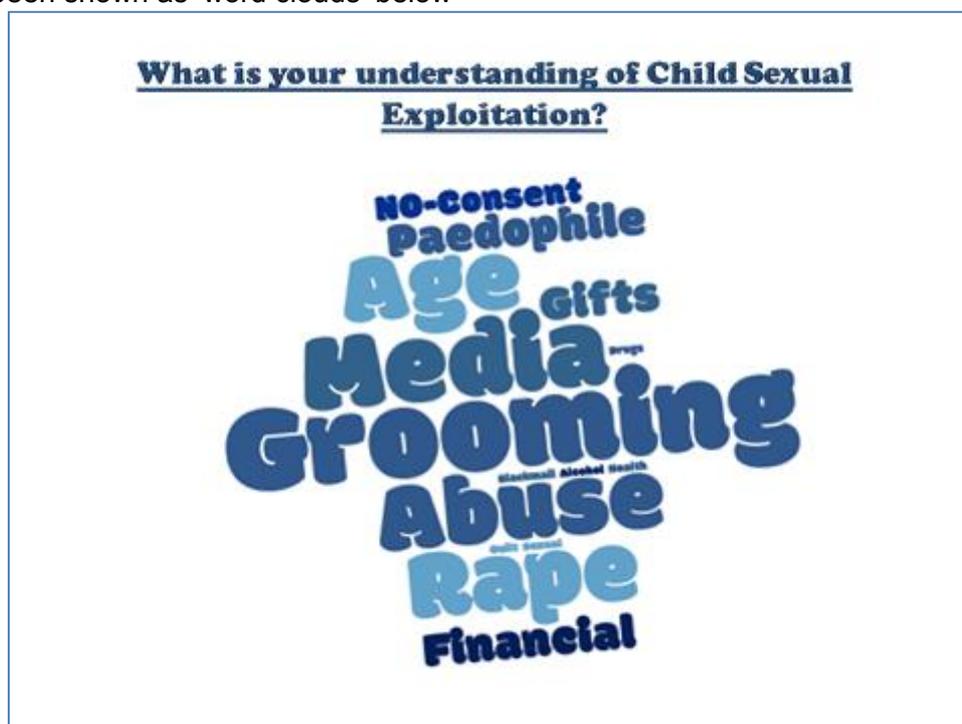
- Increase the resources for this team.

## Findings: Views of Children and Young People

To ensure that the audit was reflective of the views of children and young people, 3 secondary schools were asked to support by holding a workshop style lesson with year 9 pupils. The schools that were involved were; Dean Academy, Newent Community School and Tewkesbury School. The lessons were led by the PSHE teacher at the school, and the students were asked to work in small groups and consider the following questions:

- What is your understanding of Child Sexual Exploitation?
- What do you feel are the risks of Child Sexual Exploitation and what things might make you feel that you or a friend are at risk?
- If you think you or a friend are being exploited, what would you do?

The students were asked to write down their thoughts on a piece of flip-chart paper, which were then shared with the rest of the group. The responses were then collated and key themes identified. These have been shown as 'word clouds' below



It was interesting that when the young people were first asked about their understanding of Child Sexual Exploitation, they initially found it quite difficult to write down what they thought this meant. However, when asked if they knew what 'grooming' meant they were much more confident in their responses. This highlights that even though we talk about 'Child Sexual Exploitation' as professionals, this is not always the language that is used by young people. They showed a good understanding in terms of the fact that they might be contacted through social media, it could involve being given gifts or money in exchange for sexual activities but also that it is a form of child abuse. In terms of being given gifts, there were some discussions that took place in relation to initially being made to feel special and then being blackmailed into doing things and being taken advantage of.

**What do you feel are the risks of Child Sexual Exploitation and what things might make you feel that you or a friend are at risk?**



The young people were asked to discuss the risks of Child Sexual Exploitation and also the things that might make them feel that they, or a friend were at risk. There were a wide range of risks that were discussed, a large number in terms of health risks. For example, there were discussions that took place in relation to an increased risk of mental health issues, including self-harm, depression, behaviour changes and started to misuse drugs and alcohol. There was a good understanding of young people becoming isolated and not having any self-confidence. There was also a good understanding in relation to being approached online.

**If you think you or a friend are being exploited what would you do?**



Finally, the young people were asked to think about what they would do if they thought that they, or a friend were being exploited. Again, this generated a good discussion and it was positive to see that

there was a good understanding of the need to tell someone, whether this be a teacher, the police, Childline or CEOP. There was also a good understanding of how to block people on Social Media and also how to use the reporting button to report issues of concern.

## **Findings: Governance Arrangements**

CSE is a priority for the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board. There is a CSE/Missing Children Sub-Group of the Board, which until recently has been chaired by DCI Steve Bean from the Constabulary. However, since the audit process commenced, DCI Bean has moved on to a new role within the police and Julie Miles (GCC Service Leader) has subsequently taken on the role of Chair of the Sub-Group. The CSE/Missing Children Sub-Group meets on a quarterly basis and the Chair of the Sub-Group is also a member of the GSCB Executive Committee.

Through the GSCB 2016/17 business planning processes, it was identified that the membership and terms of reference for the CSE/Missing Children Sub-Group should be reviewed to ensure that the group is able to appropriately monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the County's approach to identifying and tackling child sexual exploitation (CSE) and also the responses for children who go missing. It has been identified from the meeting minutes that attendance at these meetings is often sporadic and consideration needs to be given to how the group can be more targeted in its response and have more of a 'holding to account' role in relation to delivery against the GSCB Business Plan and also findings from audits, peer challenges and Inspections. An example of this is in relation to the production of an up to date Gloucestershire CSE Problem Profile, which was identified in 2015 and has not yet been completed. A further example would be in relation to whether the Board is assured that there has been robust oversight of the findings and recommendations from a number of Peer reviews and Inspections that were undertaken during 2015.

The CSE Protocol was produced in 2012 and although it remains broadly fit for purpose it has been identified that there is a need for the Protocol to be updated in line with the findings from the Bristol 'Brooke' report and to also take into account changes to the CSE Screening Tool and process. Julie Miles, Service Leader and Children's Social Care CSE Lead is taking the lead for reviewing and updating the CSE Protocol, although there is not yet a date for when this work will be completed.

The GSCB CSE Commissioning Strategy was produced in 2014 and focuses on the following 5 key outcomes:

- Prevention, awareness and public confidence
- Early identification and protection
- Bringing perpetrators to justice
- Intervention and support to young people and their families
- Intelligence gathering and performance monitoring

At the time that the Strategy was produced, it was agreed that the monitoring of both the strategy and action plan would be the responsibility of the CSE Strategy Working Group and that they would regularly report to the GSCB on progress, flagging any areas of potential concerns or risks. It was also agreed that the action plan would be refreshed on an annual basis, with the GSCB approval. The latest version of the action plan on the GSCB website relates to the 2014/15 financial year which does question whether there are robust arrangements in place between the CSE Strategy Working Group and the GSCB Executive Committee. From reviewing the CSE/Missing Children Sub-Group minutes, It is also not clear how the CSE/Missing Children Sub-Group holds the CSE Strategy Working Group to account for delivery against the CSE Action Plan.

## **Conclusions**

The findings from this deep dive audit highlight that the screening tool is embedded and well used across the county and that the revised tool is seen to be easier to use. However, there are still people

who do not know about the screening tool and where to find it, which is of concern and the GSCB needs to think about the best ways in which to raise awareness of the Screening Tool on an ongoing basis.

It is positive to see that there has been a significant increase in professional's knowledge about CSE since 2012. In 2012, 70% of professionals felt that they knew 'a little' about CSE, whereas in 2016 72% stated that they knew 'quite a lot' or 'a lot' about CSE. Nevertheless, there was a strong view from those professionals who took part in the questionnaire and focus group that there is a need for more training, awareness raising and focus groups. The multi-agency CSE training course is well attended, so the GSCB may need to consider whether other bespoke forms of training are needed or whether there is a need for further awareness raising in relation to the training that is already available.

In terms of practice, the audit evidenced some good examples of robust risk assessment and multi-agency working. For example in one case audited from 2014, there was limited evidence of adequate multi agency working and risk assessment. This was in contrast to cases where the screening tool had been completed more recently (within the last year), where tighter joint work and risk management was found. Nevertheless, in line with what we know nationally both the audit and focus group survey triangulated to show the real challenges of working with young people who might not realise that they are either being exploited or at risk of exploitation.

At a strategic level, the audit has shown that the GSCB may need to have greater oversight of the work of the CSE/Missing Children Sub-Group to provide assurance that the findings from peer challenges and inspections are embedded into practice and that actions in the CSE Action Plan are completed to time. There is also a need to ensure that the CSE problem profile is completed by the agreed deadline.

## Recommendations

- Note good practice and areas where there is clear evidence that as a result of the intervention, the risk to the child or young person has decreased.
- Send out a GSCB alert to raise awareness of the CSE Screening Tool, guidance document and the training that is available
- Consider the best way in which the next steps identified through the professionals focus group can be taken forward
- Request that the CSE/Missing Children Sub-Group review their terms of reference and membership as a matter of priority to ensure that the group has a clear purpose and robust oversight
- Ensure that the CSE Problem Profile is completed by the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2016
- Continue to drive awareness and understanding of the fact that children and young people rarely see themselves as being at risk of exploitation or that they are being exploited
- For the GSCB to request that all partner agencies look at their own data collection mechanisms relating to CSE in order to inform a full partner agency problem profile
- For the GSCB to seek assurance that there is a focus on disruption and bringing perpetrators to justice, as well as providing support to victims