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Meeting: A special briefing for Members of the Health, Schools and Care O&S Committee and for all other Members of the Council regarding the IICSA report

Date: Wednesday, 23rd May, 2018

Time: 6.00 pm.

Venue: Hollingworth Rooms A, B and C, First Floor, Number One Riverside, Smith Street, Rochdale, OL16 1XU

Item No.	AGENDA	Page No
1.	APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence.	
2.	IICSA - A SPECIAL BRIEFING FOR ELECTED MEMBERS Members of the Council, led by the Health, Schools and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee will receive a presentation that should facilitate information and discussion about the following issues: a. The inquiry: its background, scope and focus b. Context and culture c. Rochdale's role d. What happened to children in Cambridge House and Knowl View e. Key areas of concern/failure f. Political accountability g. Could it happen now? h. Where do we get assurance currently i. What can Councillors learn from this? j. Any questions?	3 - 23

To: all Members of the Council – Members of the (Health, School and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee are listed below):

Councillor Cecile Biant	Councillor Lynne Brosnan
Councillor Wendy Cocks	Councillor Patricia Mary Dale
Councillor Irene Davidson	Councillor Ray Dutton (Chair)
Councillor James Gartside	Councillor Jean Hornby
Councillor Alan McCarthy	Councillor Susan Smith
Councillor Patricia Sullivan (Vice Chair)	

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Agenda Item 2

Report to Health, Schools and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of Meeting	23 rd May 2018
Portfolio	Children's Services
Report Author	Gail Hopper / Steve Rumbelow
Public/Private Document	

Response to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) Report publication in April 2018

Purpose of report

1. This report has been prepared for the consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, following the publication of the IICSA report into its Inquiry into historical events in which children in institutional settings were harmed between the 1960's and mid 1990's.
The purpose is to summarise the findings from the report, its context and process, but importantly to provide members with information and assurance about what has changed since that period.

Introduction

2. The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) was established as an independent statutory inquiry under the Enquiries Act 2005 in March 2015, by the then Home Secretary Teresa May. In November 2015 the Inquiry announced that it would commence with 13 areas of investigation. One of those was "An inquiry into allegations of the sexual abuse and exploitation of children residing at or attending Cambridge House Boys' Hostel, Knowl View School, and other institutions where their placement was arranged or provided by Rochdale Borough Council." The council made its support for the Inquiry clear from the outset.

A public hearing took place over 3 weeks between 9 and 27 October 2017 in London where the council was a core participant along with complainants, two police forces and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Staff and politicians, past and present were called to give evidence alongside a wide range of evidence from witness statements and historical documents.

A report of the findings reached as a result of the hearing was published on 12 April 2018.

Background

3. The history of Cambridge House Working Boys' Hostel, an independent organisation had been widely reported in the media previously as a result of allegations against its honorary secretary Cyril Smith, who was also a councillor and later the MP for Rochdale. Similarly Sir Cyril as he later became, also had connections with Knowl View residential special school in Rochdale where wide ranging reports of harm to children continued to be reported in the media for many years after its closure.

In 2013/14 there were many allegations made in the local media of a cover up in relation to events involving Smith (by then deceased) and historical events at Knowl View. As a result Sir Neil Garnham, QC was commissioned to carry out an independent investigation into this period in Rochdale's history. The scope of his work was to examine historical information and interview potential witnesses and complainants. He was required to share any concerns about potential criminal activity with Greater Manchester Police directly.

In July 2014, the chief constable asked that Mr Garnham suspend his enquiries and the police undertook enquiries into concerns raised. This was known as Operation Clifton. It operated alongside Operation Jaguar, a separate enquiry that investigated specific allegations made by former pupils at Knowl View and other children. The police enquiries under Op. Clifton continued for almost 2 years before concluding in 2016 that there were no grounds for prosecution.

The council formally closed the Garnham enquiry in March 2016, on the basis that its remit had been subsumed into IICSA. An interim report produced by Sir Neil was passed to IICSA along with all other evidence from the council which amounted to 147,000 pages.

The Inquiry

4. The work of the Inquiry commenced in early 2016 and a specialist team assembled by the council worked closely with it until after the conclusion of the hearing in October 2017, to ensure that the council provided full and transparent assistance throughout. The difference between that and the Garnham Inquiry was that being established under the Inquiry Act 2005, potential witnesses could be compelled to provide responses, attend the hearing if required and give evidence.

The council, through its Director of Children's Services, provided a corporate statement of more than 130 pages in responses to specific areas of information requested. The Director was also required to attend the hearing on 3 separate days to assist the Inquiry in its understanding of the council's statement.

The Inquiry considered and disclosed 19,667 pages of documents to core participants. It heard evidence from 56 witnesses, either in person, through statements or published documents. Nine witnesses were complainants who were former residents at one of the institutions.

Findings of the Inquiry

5.

5.1 Child Sexual Abuse at Cambridge House and Cyril Smith

The Inquiry heard evidence that Cyril Smith was heavily involved in Cambridge House and to a lesser extent, Knowl View School. It heard that boys at Cambridge House were sexually abused by Smith under the guise of medical examinations and the disciplining of boys who played truant, were too ill to work or ran away.

Concerns were shared with the council in 1966 after a resident alleged sexual abuse by Smith who had a direct involvement in decision making about placements at the hostel and was said to put pressure on council staff to place young men there.

It heard that Lancashire police (the force covering Rochdale at the time) conducted an extensive investigation into Smith in 1969-70 in relation to the alleged indecent assault of 8 boys; 6 of whom were residents at Cambridge House. The police concluded that Smith should be prosecuted and submitted a comprehensive report to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). A decision was returned 6 days later advising that there should be no prosecution as the charges were stale, the allegations could not be corroborated and the character of some of the boys would be likely to render some of their evidence suspect.

The Inquiry made no findings as to whether the advice that there were no reasonable prospects of a conviction was or was not reasonable.

Smith went onto receive a knighthood in 1988. The Inquiry received evidence that those involved in the appointment were informed of and deliberated on the above decision by the DPP.

A further opportunity to prosecute Smith for events at Cambridge House arose in 1998 involving Greater Manchester Police. The Crown Prosecution Service also decided not to bring charges because Smith had been informed in 1970 that no further action would be taken and it was considered to be an abuse of process by the CPS to commence a prosecution so many years later.

These investigations and the multiple concerns and local rumours led the inquiry to conclude that many were aware of allegations of child sexual abuse by Smith. The Inquiry found that he was “well informed and was willing to attempt to persuade any accusers to keep quiet”, and that there was an “...unwillingness to consider that someone in a position of public prominence might be capable of perpetrating abuse”

5.2 Child Sexual Abuse at Knowl View School

The Inquiry heard evidence that “there was a wealth of evidence” that boys at Knowl View School were sexually abused and that the abuse took place within the school and elsewhere in Rochdale.

Perpetrators included a member of staff who abused children at the school.

“he would watch me shower, tell me how to masturbate in the shower. At the time I was only 10 years old. I didn’t know what masturbation was. I just thought it was washing myself”.

A witness and former resident of Knowl View School

A convicted perpetrator, Rodney Hilton was repeatedly able to gain access to boys within the school. Evidence to the Inquiry showed that sexual activity between boys resident in Knowl View also took place and that it was known to staff. Notably a report in 1976 described sexual abuse between these boys as a “subcultural tradition”.

The Inquiry called the former directors of Social Services and Education to give direct evidence to the Inquiry. A number of criticisms were made of how Knowl View School was lead and managed and of its effectiveness in meeting children’s needs and protecting them from harm. The Director of Social Services was heavily criticised for failing to pursue child protection matters and ensure an investigation into these matters. A lack of urgency and allowing matters to drift was a particular concern. Further detail will be shared about this at the briefing presentation.

The Interim report states: During the public hearing, Richard Farnell, the leader of the council between 1986 and 1992 and the serving leader at the time of the hearing, testified about his lack of knowledge that child sexual abuse had taken place at Knowl View School. Councillor Farnell said he had no recollection of it being brought to his attention. The Inquiry found this was despite what it concluded was compelling evidence to suggest otherwise. The Inquiry found that Councillor Farnell “sought to shirk his responsibility and render himself totally unaccountable for the ills of Knowl view and the children who suffered”.

5.3 Child Sexual Exploitation in Rochdale

The inquiry heard evidence that boys at Knowl View and other care homes were also exploited for money by men around Rochdale. This happened as recently as the early 1990’s and took place in locations including public toilets in Smith Street, directly across the road from the council’s main offices. There were reports that men from all over the north west of England came to Rochdale to exploit and sexually abuse these boys.

Evidence to the inquiry showed that the sexual exploitation of boys from Knowl View was known to the school, to Rochdale Borough Council Social Services and Education departments and to the police. The Inquiry

considered how and why child sexual exploitation at Rochdale could have been allowed to continue without effective action being taken.

The inquiry found that “sexual exploitation of children was known about by the authorities from at least 1989....the records of individual children convey a total lack of urgency on the part of the authorities to address the problem and treat the matters involved for what they were – serious sexual assaults....rather boys as young as 11 were not seen as victims but as authors of their own abuse.”

The Council’s Apology

6. In examining the evidence that made up the lengthy corporate statement, it was clear there had been significant failures on the part of the council, particularly in relation to Knowl View. It was clear however that the council had not previously acknowledged its responsibility for these failures and it was important to do so.

The chief executive of the council, Steve Rumbelow, made the following statement on behalf of the council in September 2017:

“The events that took place at Cambridge House and Knowl View and other establishments in Rochdale have cast a long shadow over the town for many years and have undoubtedly caused pain to many people.

“The council acknowledges that there were significant failings, both in the way that Knowl View School was managed, and in the council’s response to concerns about sexual abuse within and outside the school.

“That was, frankly, unforgivable. On behalf of Rochdale Borough Council, I would like to apologise sincerely to anyone who was failed by the council during those years.

“We cannot turn the clock back. But as the current chief executive of the council, working with the director of children’s services and partner agencies such as the police, and through the Rochdale Safeguarding Children’s Board, I can make sure that we continue do our level best to safeguard our children and young people now and in the future.

“The council is doing everything it can to support and work with the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in its task and I hope that it can help us fully understand what happened in Rochdale all those years ago.”

Changes between historical events and the current time

7. The Inquiry reached 35 conclusions in all. Some of these relate to other public bodies, but the majority are relevant to the council. A separate table has been produced which will be tabled at the meeting. It summarises each conclusion and what actions if not already addressed are required in response.

As previously set out, the events addressed in the Inquiry happened between 1964 and 1994. Much has changed in that time and it was recognised by the Inquiry that the failures of that time should not be judged by today's standards.

Some of the events reported by the Inquiry are frankly indefensible, in that whenever they occurred they would not have been considered acceptable or reasonable. Other events reflected a level of understanding, knowledge and awareness that did not reflect a level of development or learning that was established in other parts of the country at the same point in time. Essentially, Rochdale was very slow to respond to national learning, guidance and expectations in the late 1980s and early 1990s when greater and faster progress was being made in other areas of the region and the country.

The purpose of the table is to outline how events have changed and how current legislation, guidance, policies and practice are in place to protect children in a way that clearly did not happen then. The fact that such changes were made do not in isolation, protect children. It is important that these changes are supported by values, principles, strong leadership, direction and monitoring of practice to ensure that the things that should be in place actually happen.

The role of the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children's Board (RBSCB), has a statutory function in evaluating the quality of practice and in challenging the council and its partners to ensure that all organisations are operating effectively and in partnership to ensure that children are effectively safeguarded. The Chair of RBSCB has undertaken an assurance exercise which will be shared with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to demonstrate what provides that assurance and how this is judged. It is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

Conclusions

8. There is no doubt that some children were harmed in the settings described. In establishing the facts around some of the events, through a substantial amount of written evidence, in the council's possession, it was clear that there had been a significant number of failures. In the period between 1989 and 1992 there is also evidence that children were harmed in public toilets and elsewhere in Rochdale as a result of sexual exploitation. Whilst this was not a concept of child abuse that was as fully understood as it is today, it is clear that it has never been acceptable for any adult to engage in sexual activity with a child, whatever the setting, age difference or apparent compliance.

The response of the council to incidents of abuse at Knowl View, involving a convicted offender and in relation to abuse of children at Smith Street toilets was in breach of the Working Together national guidance that was in place for local authorities and their child protection partners at the time. The council as the lead agency was some three years out of date in responding to national

guidance changes. It was also clear that an apology from the council was well overdue. This was addressed in 2017.

Many of the findings by the review reflect information that was provided in documentation, statements and verbal evidence to the hearing. They reflected weaknesses in leadership, governance, political accountability, management, professional knowledge and poor skill levels.

In that context, there were few surprises in the findings for those who were actively involved in the provision of data to IICSA and in preparation of the corporate statement.

The appalling history in respect of Cambridge House, Knowl View and Cyril Smith's role within both have also had a continuing impact on how Rochdale has been able to move forward for many years. The conclusion of this hearing and publication of the report may now provide victims with some acknowledgement if not closure. For the borough it may allow some forward thinking that is not regularly blighted by continued reflections.

The arrangements now in place to safeguard children in Rochdale are significantly stronger than they have been in the past. Partnership arrangements are strong, scrutiny and challenge by the council and the Safeguarding Children Board are also able to demonstrate regular and robust challenge.

Recommendations

9. The Inquiry stated that it did not intend to make any recommendations in respect of this investigation in its report. It does expect the local authority and other public bodies to reflect on the report findings and make such changes in practice that are necessary to protect children in future.

The passage of time since the events covered by the report means that as outlined above many changes have occurred which means that practice is now very different. For this reason a report describing Rochdale in 2017 was submitted to the hearing with the council's closing statement to reflect such changes. It is attached as Appendix 2.

Background Papers	Place of Inspection
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Safeguarding Children in Care Settings – Assurance Exercise

In October 2017 the Independent Chair of the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board commenced an assurance exercise around the safeguards that are currently in place in respect of children living in care settings. At this time the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) was hearing evidence in relation to historical concerns, dating back more than 20 years. These concerned allegations of abuse of children living either in Knowl View (a residential special school) or Cambridge House, a hostel for working boys aged 15/16/17 run by a small voluntary organisation.

In the intervening years many Public Enquiries and Reviews have focussed on safeguarding children in care (now referred to as looked after children – in Rochdale Cared 4 Children) and care leavers; the legal framework of the Children Act 1989 came into force, together with detailed volumes of guidance and specific regulations covering care and care arrangements. These have been refreshed and revised many times since then. The legal and professional landscape is almost unrecognisable.

All LSCB partners complete an annual audit of compliance with safeguarding requirements and must provide evidence which is challenged. This evidences high levels of compliance with statutory safeguarding requirements across the sector in Rochdale. That said the Chair felt that it was important to obtain additional assurance.

This report draws on responses provided by the following agencies:

- Greater Manchester Police
- Rochdale Borough Council
- HMR CCG
- Private providers

Seventeen of the elements of the Safeguarding audit are relevant in this context. The evidence collected provides the assurance as follows:

Safeguarding Standard	
1. Leadership able to demonstrate commitment to safeguarding via business discussed in management meetings	All agencies were able to evidence safeguarding issues impacting on strategic business and being discussed at the highest level and cascaded through the organisation.
2. Staff have access to safeguarding policies and procedures in induction and receive regular updates	All agencies were able to evidence that staff induction programmes included safeguarding policies and procedures and that staff had access to these on-line. All agencies provide basic training to all staff who might work with a child/family and specific training for those for whom this is core

	task.
3. Clear whistle blowing procedures for staff/volunteers	All agencies were able to evidence that these are in place and staff and volunteers are supported to make use of them.
4. Safe recruitment procedures for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children	All agencies can evidence that checks are made with the Data and Barring Service as appropriate, with enhanced vetting for specific posts. HR procedures are in place in all organisations with references fully checked and gaps in service explored. There has also been increased training relating to Allegations Management and safer working practices delivered the Local Authority designated Officer (LADO). The LADO has proactive relationship with the Data and Barring Service (DBS) and supports referrals to the DBS and updates Policy and Procedures and training accordingly.
5. Policy in place and effective re visitors to residential units	CSC policy re visitors to residential care settings was endorsed by the RBSCB. It requires all visitors to be signed in and for ID to be checked at all times. Regulation 44 ¹ visits confirm that that all Children's Services Residential Homes follow the policy re visitors to residential care settings
6. Children have access to advocacy and independent visitors	CSC Children's Services has commissioned independent advocacy and independent visiting via the Children's Society. Quarterly contract meetings are held and data is shared to support monitoring of the support provided to Cared 4 Children. Police officers investigating abuse allegations are required to speak to the child alone and have had training and support in this respect.
7. Regulation 44 visits conducted regularly consider safeguarding issues and are scrutinised by senior managers to ensure any required action is taken. Regulation 44 reports are analysed for	The Fostering Independent Reviewing Officer (FIRO) conducts Regulation 44 Visits in line with requirements and is accompanied by designated Elected Members for the individual children's residential homes. The reports are submitted to the Service Manager Safeguarding for independent oversight and scrutiny before submission. The oversight is reported to the Corporate Parenting

¹ Regulation 44 visits: The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.

(2) When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—

(a) if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and

(b) to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires.

(3) A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced.

(4) The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—

(a) children are effectively safeguarded; and

(b) the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.

trends	Board. The FIRO also completes an annual report within which they report on all their roles and responsibilities including Regulation 44 Visits. Additionally, the relevant Residential Managers, Head of Provider Services, Elected Members, FIRO and Safeguarding Practice and Service Managers meet twice per year to review the process and information arising out of the visits and ensure that all relevant information is being collated.
8. Appropriate supervision and support for staff	All agencies report supervision arrangements are in place though the format does vary. Practice assurance around safeguarding cases is seen as a priority in this.
9. Clear policies in line with the LSCB for dealing with allegations against people who work with children LADO Service in place and effective	All agencies report that staff understand the LADO procedures and each agency has an identified single point of contact (SPOC). RBSCB receives regular reports about LADO activity and is provided with assurance that cases are effectively managed. Training is available to partner agencies and open to private organisations on a regular basis and LADO processes and criteria has also been the subject of briefings via the CSC Practice Managers briefings, Whole Service Briefings and incorporated into other linked training, e.g. Safer Working Practices.
10. Policies and procedures in place to provide safeguards re on-line risks.	All agencies have HR policies about staff use of the internet. The Greater Manchester multi agency procedures provide guidance on e-safety safer working practice. In addition, RBSCB has produced a guide for safer working practices for adults who work with children and young people in the Rochdale Borough which includes a specific section on internet use.
11. Appropriate safeguarding children training for staff	All agencies can evidence that training is delivered.
12. Staff access regular RBSCB web-site updates	The RBSCB website provides a facility to register for updates which is promoted through multi agency training, via social media and the RBSCB/RBSAB newsletter. The site is updated several times every month and email alerts are sent to all staff registered. There are currently 1,664 staff registered on the site.
13. Voice of child informs service development	The recent ILAC inspection noted that the Local Authority “promotes and encourages the participation of children young and young people to shape and develop services Children in care are supported to see their lives positively with a range of inclusive initiatives to ensure they can contribute and influence strategic and individual decision making” . This provides external

	<p>validation of the child's voice influencing service development. In addition this Inspection noted that the Local Authority has strengthened its role as a corporate parent, and the scrutiny and support of political and senior leaders in this work have supported a range of improvements. The Children in Care Council(The Zone) are active participants of the Corporate Parenting Board providing a direct link to decision making at the highest level. Children's Services has a vibrant Youth Parliament which is well embedded and it's reach and influence is supported at Cabinet level with recent examples including Cabinet delegating the airport dividend to the MYP to support changes in relation to children and young people's mental health.</p>
<p>14. Disruption meetings take place when child makes unplanned move</p>	<p>There is an agreed Disruption Policy in place for the ending of all permanent placements where a long term match has been agreed and ratified. The policy is currently being rolled out and implemented across all services to ensure the policy is applied consistently. The FIRO currently has the lead for chairing disruption meetings which provides a high level of independence to the process.</p> <p>Monitoring of placement moves and unplanned endings are overseen at all levels through agreed performance systems and are inclusive of Corporate Parenting. An exceptions report on the number of unplanned endings was presented to the March 2018 CPB. The learning from which is being included in the Permanence Strategic plan.</p> <p>This includes developing and extending a disruption process for any placement that ends in an unplanned way.</p>
<p>15. A culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings both in individual decisions and development of services</p>	<p>With reference to the evidence relating to the voice of the child, additionally the ILACS recognised and acknowledged that that social workers see children and young people regularly, knew their children and young people well had understood their wishes and feelings. This provides validation that children's and wishes and feelings are taken into account and critically the inspection noted that "many children benefit from good quality purposeful direct work to inform their care planning. Children are supported to take part in their reviews and have access to advocates to represent them". This provides evidence of the organisation culture of listening to children and young people and taking account of their wishes and feelings in planning on an individual needs led basis.</p>
<p>16. A culture of listening to staff and taking account of their wishes and feelings both in individual decisions and</p>	<p>All agencies are able to evidence mechanisms for staff consultation.</p>

development of services	
17. Care Leavers – the experiences and feedback of care leavers is gathered and informs interventions and service development	The recent Ofsted inspection indicated that the experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers is good

Additionally, arrangements for care of children have changed dramatically over time. Cambridge House was a hostel for working boys. It was not a local authority children's home and was not subject to the management oversight that a children's home would have experienced even in the 60s. The boys had reached school leaving age. At that time, even had they been in care previously, there were no statutory support services for care leavers as such. Arrangements today are radically different. Today every looked after child has the arrangements for their care reviewed with an Independent Reviewing Officers to ensure the care they receive meets their needs. Those who have little or no family contact are offered an independent visitor to support them and promote their well-being and all children in care can access an advocacy service. Support to care leavers now continues to be offered up to the age of 25; with each care leaver allocated a Personal Advisor. Targets are set to ensure all have access to suitable accommodation and in 2017/18 in Rochdale 89% had suitable accommodation. The recent Ofsted inspection indicated that the experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers is good. It was notes that the service for care leavers had improved significantly since the last inspection (2014) with children leaving care benefiting from proactive work by personal advisers who worked hard to maintain relationships with them.

The boys placed a Cambridge House would probably present today as either care leavers or at risk of homelessness. Today 16 to 18 year olds potentially at risk of homelessness are offered an assessment, and if they agree, are accommodated as looked after children. For children who have been in foster care there is now provision for them to remain with their carers - "Staying Put" placements – or move to semi-independence with support – "Staying Close" provision. Rochdale takes additional steps to support young people in the semi-independent living setting as this sector is not subject to the same degree of regulation as children's homes or foster care and in some areas there have been concerns about quality.

The children placed at Knowl View were in an educational setting. At that time education and children's social care were managed in separate departments with little connection or coordination. Only very small numbers of children today require residential education and this only happens where local provision is unable to meet their complex needs. Today all children with complex health and social care needs have an Education and Health Care Plan in place and residential schools are heavily regulated. Where the young person is placed full time within a residential school they are deemed Cared 4 and therefore subject to Statutory Reviews

Both children's homes and schools are subject now of external inspection from Ofsted.

There were significant failings in the response to concerns about the children in Cambridge House and Knowl View in the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s. Responses to allegations of peer on peer abuse, sexual exploitation, and allegations about staff or volunteers were not robust and did not protect them. Today all allegations of abuse are dealt with by a multi-disciplinary team in accordance with LSCB safeguarding policies and procedures. Allegations about peer on peer abuse are dealt with in the same way as any other safeguarding concern; a specialist team deals with all sexual exploitation concerns and there is a multi-agency system for dealing with allegation against professionals or volunteers.

Today the concept of the "Corporate Parent" is well established, particularly with councillors and those who work within the council. All those who have the opportunity for unsupervised contact with children are vetted and councillors receive training on their role. Those who visit children's homes to carry out quality visits have specific training for this role and understand how to refer on any concerns. There is a lead councillor for children and a scrutiny committee which receives reports on children's matters.

While the statutory lead for safeguarding children sits with the Director of Children's Services, there is widespread recognition that safeguarding is everybody's business and that this is more than a mantra. Partnership working is well established and has supported innovative responses to safeguarding children, to the point where Rochdale is now acknowledged as having had a major role in the transformation and ongoing development of services for abused and sexually exploited children. None-the-less the LSCB continues to challenge, to audit and review the quality of safeguarding responses.

This additional assurance exercise has provided evidence that the circumstances which permitted the abuse of children at Cambridge House and Knowl View and prevented effective investigation could not be re-created in the current professional, regulatory or legal climate. That said we can never eradicate risk and there is no room for complacency. Risks of abuse can be reduced but abusers will still find ways to target vulnerable young people. The exercise has provided evidence that agencies have in place policies and procedures, and trained staff who will respond very differently today. The LSCB will continue to challenge to ensure that these features do operate to protect the children we serve.

Jane Booth

Independent Chair

Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board.

Position Statement – Rochdale in 2017

1. The national context

1.1 In the nearly 23 years since the last pupil left Knowl View school there has been a sea change in the way that children and young people are safeguarded from abuse. Legislation, statutory guidance and policy concerning vulnerable children and young people, whether in care, care leavers, attending residential schools or at risk of abuse or exploitation in any way, has moved forward exponentially over these years.

1.2 In 1997, only 2 years after Knowl View finally closed, “People Like Us: the report of the review of the safeguards for children living away from home” was published. This report reviewed the safeguards that had been introduced by the Children Act 1989, and more recent measures to protect children living away from home, with particular reference to children's residential homes, foster care and boarding schools.

1.3 This was followed, in 1998, by “Quality Protects”, which set out the government's aspirations for improvement in the services provided for children and young people. 2 years later the Waterhouse Inquiry Report, “Lost in Care” (2000) reported on allegations of abuse in homes in North Wales. The Residential Care Regulations 2001 restated that all children had the right to be protected from abuse, including those in care.

1.4 Following the death of eight-year old Victoria Climbié in 2000, the Government asked Lord Laming to conduct an inquiry (Laming, 2003) to help decide whether to introduce new legislation and guidance to improve the child protection system in England. The Government's response was the Keeping Children Safe report (DfES, DH and Home Office, 2003) and the Every Child Matters green paper. “Every Child Matters”, published December 2003, set out the ‘five outcomes’, including ‘being safe’.

1.5 The Children Act 2004 took the philosophy of ‘Every Child Matters’ and placed it on a statutory basis, with safeguarding at the top of the agenda. The Act strengthened the roles of local authorities and created the new roles of Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services, the person ultimately accountable for the delivery of Children's Services. The Act also introduced the independent national Children's Commissioner (recommended by the Waterhouse Inquiry) and introduced statutory Local Safeguarding Children Boards. Through the creation of the new unified role of Director of Children's Services, the Children Act 2004 effectively integrated Education Departments and Children's Social Care, which had previously been very separate, across England and Wales,

1.6 The Bichard Inquiry report in 2004, following the Soham murders, led to a significant overhaul of the way vetting and barring processes for staff and volunteers working with children were managed.

1.7 The Children and Young Persons Act, 2008, enshrined the principles of “Care Matters” to drive forward high quality services for children in care.

1.8 In May 2011 Professor Eileen Munro published her Review of the Child Protection system in England and Wales. Her recommendations have influenced the development of improved practice, both nationally and in Rochdale. Professor Munro's report led to “*Working Together to Safeguard Children*”, published on 26th March 2015 (updated: 16th February 2017), the most recent Statutory Guidance on multi-agency safeguarding practice.

Position Statement – Rochdale in 2017

1.9 In 2016, Sir Martin Narey's report "Residential Care in England" concludes "*Children's homes can and should be better...But the overwhelming majority of homes are already good or better and I have witnessed the care of children in some of which we, as a society, can be proud.*"

2. Services for young people in care, and leaving care, in Rochdale today

2.1 Cambridge House was a hostel for working boys, run by a small voluntary association between 1961 and 1965. As such it was not a local authority children's home and was therefore not subject to the level of management oversight that children's homes, even then, would have experienced. The boys that were placed in Cambridge House by the Council were young men who had reached school leaving age and were therefore probably viewed as care leavers, although they were only 15 or 16 years old. There was no statutory duty to provide after care for young people leaving care at that time.

2.2 Children and young people looked after by Rochdale in 2017 are in a very different position from that of children in care in the 1960s. Legislation, policy and practice have incorporated the principles and aspirations of Quality Protects and Care Matters to strengthen and enhance the services that the Council and other agencies provide to children in care. Since the implementation of the Children Act in 1991 the concept of Corporate Parenting has been used to refer to the collective responsibility of councillors and officers of the Council towards looked after children and care leavers. It is an issue that is taken very seriously in Rochdale with a Corporate Parenting Board, led by the Lead Member. The Corporate Parenting Board involves elected members, officers at all levels from a range of council services, foster carers and young people. It has a clear role in setting standards and expectations, quality assuring delivery and importantly, listening and responding to the views of cared for children

2.3 Nationally, the size of the looked after population is significantly smaller than in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, as far more resources have been channelled into preventative services and supporting children to remain within their birth families, or move on to new permanent families. Rochdale has recently been very successful in safely reducing it's looked after population by 100 as a result of successfully implementing a new permanence strategy. This has resulted in a huge increase in younger children being adopted in 2015/2016, which placed Rochdale as the 4th best performer on adoption in the country. Likewise there has been an increase in the number of children achieving permanence through Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs), with other family members; this means that when this is right of the child, a family foster placement can become a forever placement.

2.4 There has also been a major shift nationally between the proportion of looked after children living in residential care and foster care. In Rochdale in 2017 only 8% of looked after children live in children's homes.

2.5 There are a number of performance indicators that measure how well Councils are performing in relation to their responsibilities towards looked after young people in their care. Two of the most important of these relate to the stability of placements, as that is such a crucial determinant in relation to outcomes. Currently only 5% of Rochdale's children in care have experienced had 3 or more placements in a year, which is the best performance in the North West region.

Position Statement – Rochdale in 2017

Key Performance Indicator	2015/16	2016/17	Latest	SN Av	Eng. Av
Placement Stability - 3 moves	5.80%	3.9%	5.0%	8.1%	10.0%
Placement Stability - Long Term	71%	69.9%	64.8%	69.9%	68.0%

2.6 Every looked after child has a regular statutory review to ensure that their care plan is working well for them, that their placements are meeting their needs and that they are they are achieving their expected outcomes. In Rochdale 98.8% of all reviews for children in care in 2016-17 took place within the prescribed timescales.

2.7 In relation to young people leaving care in 2017, the Children Act 1989, followed by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and more recently the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010, enshrined in legislation the responsibilities of local authorities towards care leavers. The current guidance regarding support to care leavers is up to 21 for all and 25 for those in full time education. This is changing imminently as the legislation is changing; guidance is currently awaited on this. The new care leaver offer will be open to all care leavers up to the age of 25. Each care leaver is allocated a Personal Advisor (PA) at age 16 to provide a 2 year cross over of PA and social worker (SW) support.

2.8 There are a number of performance indicators that measure how well Councils are performing in relation to their responsibilities towards care leavers. These measures look at how many care leavers the Council is in touch with, where they are living and whether they are in education, employment or training. On these measures Rochdale's performance is consistently ahead of similar Councils and the National average. These means that the focus of Rochdale's service for care leavers now is on the quality of intervention and targeting particularly vulnerable cohorts of young people, such those not in education, training or employment.

Key Performance Indicator	2015/16	2016/17	Latest	SN Av	Eng. Av
% Care Leavers now aged 19-21 in touch with LA	91.2%	89.7%	93.0%	89.7%	87.3%
% Care Leavers now aged 19-21 in EET	50.0%	55.0%	52.0%	46.5%	49.0%
% Care Leavers now aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation	88.0%	91.7%	89%	83.8%	83.8%

2.9 In terms of commissioning residential care placements for looked after young people, Rochdale is part of the Greater Manchester Residential Framework. All providers on the

Position Statement – Rochdale in 2017

framework have been through a rigorous tender process including quality checks. Rochdale monitors every residential provision that is used on a regular basis, including reviewing Regulation 44 reports, and Ofsted visits and through regular monitoring visits, in addition to the visits by social workers to young people resident in such settings.

2.10 There is also a North West Leaving Care contract in place for care leavers' placements which is utilised for all 16+ placements including Supported Accommodation, flats with floating support and group living. All providers have to meet Minimum Standards to be part of the contract. Any unresolved concerns emerging from any placement settings are shared with the other Local Authorities in the in the North West.

2.11 All Rochdale placements which are externally commissioned are reviewed by either a Placement Panel or a Multi-Agency Panel to ensure that they continue to meet the needs and deliver the intended outcomes for the young people in placement

2.12 Some of the other young men in Cambridge House could have been otherwise homeless. In 2017 young people in Rochdale age 16 to 18 potentially at risk of homelessness are offered an assessment, and if they agree, accommodated as looked after young people under the Children Act 1989, in line with the Southwark Judgement of 2010. Rochdale never uses bed and breakfast provision for these young people.

2.13 However there remains a concern that whilst children's homes are regulated and inspected nationally, this is not the case for semi-independent settings for 16-18 year olds. This highlights the importance of Rochdale Council taking additional steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people living in such settings, through monitoring processes alongside the work with young people as individuals.

2.14 Since May 2014, fostered young people in England have the right to continue to live with their foster families when they reach 18, if both parties agree. There are currently 21 Rochdale young people in Staying Put placements (5 x18 year olds, 5 x19 year olds, and 11 x 20 year olds). This provides care leavers with a stable and settled launching point towards adulthood. In addition the council has introduced the "Staying Close" approach (continued support to young people to remain in semi-independent living with support beyond their 18th birthday). Legislation currently prevents young people who wish to remain in their residential placement beyond their 18th birthday, but the council continues to be involved in regional and national developments that are aimed at creating continuity into young adulthood for this smaller group of young people.

3. Residential Education today

3.1 Knowl View was a residential special school. In the 1970s and 1980s there was much more reliance on residential education than there is today and Rochdale no longer has any residential special schools. Such placements are very unusual now and most residential education placements are now commissioned in partnership with children's social care. Currently there are only 5 children in residential school placements. 3 of these placements are joint funded with children's social care.

3.2 For this very small number of pupils with specific educational needs where provision in the borough is insufficient to meet their complex needs, there is a robust and detailed commissioning process. The school has to be able to provide the provision outlined in the child's Education, Health and Care plan (EHC) plan. The development of this plan has been recognised in Rochdale as fully engaging parents and children in identifying the most appropriate ways of meeting each child's needs. Prior to consulting with a school the most

Position Statement – Rochdale in 2017

recent OFSTED reports are read, and if the local authority has not used a school before the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Officer visits the school prior to consulting with the head teacher. All residential school placements are monitored regularly via individual Annual

Reviews and OFSTED reports. Services to support children with additional educational needs are now co-produced in partnership with parents through a parental engagement process, “The Voice”.

3.3 Rochdale is continuing to extend its in-borough special school provision to ensure that as many children’s needs are appropriately met as close to home as possible, in a context in which the number of children with special educational needs is growing as in many other parts of the country.

4. Safeguarding Rochdale children in 2017

4.1 Rochdale Council has acknowledged that there were significant failings in the way concerns about the safety of children in Knowl View School were responded to in the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s. The processes and systems that now operate when referrals are received in relation to issues of peer on peer abuse, concerns about sexual exploitation or allegations of abuse by staff or volunteers are much more developed and robust than what was in place then.

4.2 Referrals of Concern

Nowadays all referrals about suspected harm to child or young person come through Rochdale’s Multi-agency Safeguarding Service (MASS). This is a partnership approach located in the police station with police, NHS and voluntary sector partners. How each referral is responded to will depend on the nature of the referral.

4.3 Child on Child Abuse

Allegations about possible child on child abuse are treated in the same way as any other concerns about risks to children of significant harm. Children’s Social Care (CSC) leads a strategy meeting with relevant partners (i.e. police, NHS, school, placement as appropriate) on both children (or more if more are involved). The alleged perpetrator would be considered in his or her own right as a as a potential victim of previous or ongoing abuse. Based on age perpetrators may also be referred to the Youth Offending Service for an AIM2 assessment in relation to harmful sexual behaviour. If the referral raises concerns about possible Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) the specialist CSE team Sunrise would also be involved.

4.4 Sexual Exploitation

Children at risk of CSE can be supported through either a Child in Need plan or a Child Protection plan, depending on level of assessed need and analysis of risk. If there are concerns about child on child abuse in a school setting the potential risks would be managed through a detailed risk assessment to inform a risk management plan to keep all children safe. In extreme circumstances, if the risk cannot be managed safely within the school or setting the alleged perpetrator may need to be moved to a different setting.

4.5 When there are concerns about suspected Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) the multi-agency Sunrise team would become involved to engage the young person, to prevent, investigate or disrupt abuse. Nowadays, a young person denying that they are in an abusive relationship is—would not end professional involvement, recognising that sexually exploited young people may not see themselves as victims of abuse. If they refuse to engage in direct work, the police and CSC continue to share information and work with families to try to keep

Position Statement – Rochdale in 2017

them safe. In extreme situations where the risk cannot be contained it may be necessary to place the young person away from an abusive network in order to disrupt abusive patterns of behaviour. Partnerships with a wide range of other organisations means that civil legislation is also used to disrupt activities where criminal investigations have not succeeded..

4.6 Allegations of abuse by professionals

Allegations of abuse by professionals are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer, known as the LADO. The role of the LADO is governed by Local Authorities' duties under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) sets out the procedures to be used when an allegation has been made that an adult in a regulated setting has: -

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) also sets out the role of the LADO, which is to is to:-

- Provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations
- Liaise with the Police; and
- Monitor the progress of all cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly and consistently as possible through the use of a fair and thorough process.

There may be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- Police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- Enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

4.7 The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. The LADO provides advice and support to agencies and keeps the Safeguarding Board up to date about any concerns emerging from this area of work.

5. Rochdale's approach to tackling Child Sexual Exploitation

5.1 The council and its partners have a nationally-recognised strategy that focuses on preventing and disrupting CSE through effective partnership working, information sharing and the wide-ranging use of council enforcement powers. The Strategy is intelligence based, which is why so much work takes place to raise awareness of the risks and signs of CSE in our schools and communities. This includes specially developed plays about CSE and about relationships which we use to teach children from primary school upwards, helping them to recognise the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships.

5.2 Rochdale's multi-agency Sunrise Team has been acknowledged by Ofsted and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies for its partnership work and innovative approach within and outside Rochdale in disrupting CSE, protecting children and young people and prosecuting those who perpetrate it. The Sunrise Team is considered a model of national best practice in tackling this issue, and uses the most modern and effective techniques to

Position Statement – Rochdale in 2017

protect victims and prosecute offenders. Rochdale's innovative practice in this area has resulted in DCLG funding to continue this work.

6. Quality of Practice and Management accountability

6.1 Rochdale now has an increasingly stable and experienced social work workforce. The Council's reputation is improving regionally and skilled people are choosing to work in Rochdale. Consequently the number of agency social workers has reduced by over 80% in the last 3 years. Feedback from social care and education staff indicates that morale is high, the Council's vision is understood and there is a listening leadership team in place.

6.2 Across Children's Social Care (CSC) there is a constant drive to improve performance and practice standards. Rochdale has well embedded Performance and Assurance systems in place to ensure that managers are accountable for the quality of practice. CSC managers and leaders are actively engaged in auditing cases, supervision records and 'closing the loop' activity, and the findings of audits are used to continually improve practice. Feedback from children, young people and parents is regularly sought in order to continuously drive further improvements in practice.

6.3 There is a comprehensive staff development and training programme in place to build the skills and confidence of the workforce.

6.4 The Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO's) have a QA framework to provide further assurance through monitoring, audits, escalation and feedback loops in performance clinics.

7. Integrated Children's Services in Rochdale

7.1 As referenced in 1.5 above, in 2004 the Children Act effectively joined up the previously separate Council departments responsible for services to children and young people; the Education Department and the Children's section of the Social Services Department. As can be seen from the way in which the concerns about Knowl view school were handled in the 1990s, this separation between education and social care was not always in the best interests of children.

7.2 In contrast, in 2017 Rochdale's Children Services provide a joined up approach across education and social care, with senior managers and practitioners from all disciplines physically working alongside each other, facilitating good communication in order to promote the optimum outcome for every child and young person in the Borough.

8. Partnership Working in 2017

8.1 In the 1980s and 1990s partnership working in Rochdale, as elsewhere at the time, was in its infancy, largely dependent upon relationships between individuals rather than governance arrangements between the agencies themselves. Since that time the climate

Position Statement – Rochdale in 2017

has changed considerably; there is now widespread recognition that child abuse, including child sexual exploitation and online exploitation, can only be tackled effectively by agencies working together.

8.2 Partnership working in Rochdale today, as evidenced through the work of the Corporate Parenting Board, the Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) and Rochdale Safeguarding Children Board (RBSCB) and Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) is a world away from the days of the Area Review Committee of the 1980s and the Area Child Protection Committee of the 1990s. The Rochdale Safeguarding Children Board (RBSCB)

operates effectively, with a well- embedded Quality Assurance (QA) framework and provides appropriate challenges to RBSCB agencies. The partnership is responsive to learning and seeking improvement through Multi-agency RBSCB audits, which consistently demonstrates the improving quality of local practice in all areas.

8.3 Rochdale Council and its partners also play a major role in influencing continued improvement across Greater Manchester (GM). The 10 councils have a programme of development in transforming children's services, working collaboratively to share learning, challenge areas of weakness and build collectively on evidence based working. The Director of Children's Services in Rochdale leads on the development of complex safeguarding across the 10 areas of GM, building on the Manchester wide success of the Phoenix CSE programme.

8.4 In the last 2 years, as part of the DfE innovation programme, Rochdale and Wigan councils and their partners have worked with academics and Research in Practice to both research and build evidence with survivors of CSE to define what works. The same group of young adults have been involved in co-designing strengths based approaches to work with young people at high risk of CSE where their home or placement setting may be at risk of breakdown. This model of working, known as ACT, has been positively evaluated by NatCen and University of Bedfordshire and will be rolled out to all councils in Greater Manchester over the next 2 years.

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