



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Full Council

Thursday 10 November 2022

Independent Inquiry Update Report

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Lee Carter - Cabinet Lead: Independent Inquiry
Lead Director:	Anthea Lowe - Director: Policy & Governance
Service Area:	Policy & Governance
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Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision
Forward Plan:	Not Applicable
Report considered by:	Not Applicable

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Council:-

- 1.1 Notes the update contained within this report in respect of the steps taken following publication of the Independent Inquiry into CSE in Telford to ensure recommendations are implemented;
- 1.2 Notes the governance model for implementing the recommendations as set out in **Appendix A** to this report;
- 1.3 Notes the steps taken to date to secure an Independent Chair and an Independent Facilitator for the Strategic Implementation Group as identified within this report;
- 1.4 Delegates authority to the Director: Policy & Governance to take all steps necessary to engage the Independent Chair and Independent Facilitator for the Strategic Implementation Group as identified within this report; and

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- 1.5 Delegates authority to the Director: Policy & Governance to take all steps necessary to engage an independent Chair for the CSE Partners Group as identified within this report.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 This report is intended to provide an update to Members in respect of the steps that have been taken to support, and progress, the implementation of recommendations following the publication of the report of Mr Tom Crowther KC, the Independent Chair of the Independent Inquiry into CSE in Telford (“the Inquiry”) on 12 July 2022.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 In 2018, it was agreed that the Council would commission a judge-led independent inquiry into historic child sexual exploitation (“CSE”) within the Borough and, further to this agreement, the Council engaged international law firm Eversheds Sutherland in January 2019 to act as an Independent Commissioning Body to appoint an independent Chair of the Inquiry. The Independent Chair, Tom Crowther KC, was appointed in July 2019 and his work commenced shortly thereafter.
- 3.2 The appointment of the Independent Chair of the Inquiry was carried out through joint working between a cross-party group of elected Members and survivors. This group also agreed the terms of reference for the Inquiry.
- 3.3 On 12 July 2022, the Independent Chair of the Inquiry published his report (“the Report”) which contained 47 recommendations. Since then, a significant amount of work has been carried out to ensure that the Council, and partner agencies, have appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure that the recommendations are implemented. This report summarises the actions taken to date.
- 3.4 On 14 July 2022, the Leader confirmed that the Council would be working with individuals with lived experience of CSE (often referred to as survivors). These three individuals have broad experience of working within the field of CSE and trafficking; being recognised on the national stage in respect of the work they do with survivors, delivering training across a range of statutory organisations, advising the Home Office on matters relating to trafficking and supporting NGOs in their efforts to combat CSE and trafficking.
- 3.5 Members will know that child safeguarding is the joint responsibility of a number of organisations and that there is a statutory requirement for these organisations to form a Safeguarding Partnership. The Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership covers both adults’ and children’s safeguarding with the Safeguarding Children’s Board being responsible for matters relating to children and young people. The Safeguarding Children’s Board, and the wider Safeguarding Partnership, is chaired by an independent Chair.
- 3.6 The terms of reference for the Inquiry sets out that the Independent Chair of the Independent Inquiry, Tom Crowther KC, will return to review implementation of the

recommendations set out in the Report two years following publication of that Report.

Actions taken since publication

- 3.7 There are a number of actions that have been undertaken since publication of the Report. These actions can be broken down into some broad categories; governance arrangements and action planning, Council-related recommendations, Partner-related recommendations (partners include West Mercia Police, West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner and Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Integrated Care System (formerly the CCG)) and, finally, joint actions across more than one organisation. More detail on each of these categories is provided below.

Governance arrangements and action planning

- 3.8 An action plan has been created which breaks down each of the 47 recommendations into individual actions; 149 in total. This action plan identifies the lead agency, lead officers within the Council, sets out what outcome each recommendation is expected to deliver and what evidence is needed to demonstrate that the recommendation has been implemented. This is a working document and will be updated regularly to reflect the changing landscape of implementation as matters progress. It should be noted that the actions encompass those that are the responsibility of a single organisation and those that are cross-cutting across two or more agencies.
- 3.9 Meetings with partners have taken place to develop a model of governance for the implementation of recommendations and to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place for approval across all organisations as well as allowing for the Safeguarding Partnership having oversight of the partnership response. Attached at **Appendix A** is a copy of the governance model, which is described in more detail below. The governance model provides for a number of groups, each with an individual purpose.

3.9.1 Internal Operations Group (IOG)

The IOG is a group which is an internal Council group. This group is chaired by a member of the Senior Management Team and comprises officers from across a number of services within the Council, from ICT to licensing, finance to children's services. The purpose of this group is, amongst other things, to:-

- a) using, their service area expertise, suggest ways in which the recommendations can be implemented;
- b) receive actions from the Strategic Implementation Group (SIG); and
- c) ensure actions are implemented within their respective service areas.

Each organisation has similar internal arrangements to consider recommendations in respect of their own agencies.

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3.9.2 Strategic Implementation Group (SIG)

The SIG is a group made up of a number of individuals internal to the Council and external partners. The individuals with lived experience are part of this group. The purpose of this group is, amongst other things, to:-

- a) consider the action plan and agree the approach to implementation of recommendations;
- b) provide insight from those with lived experience in terms of the potential impacts of proposed actions;
- c) act as a forum for holding each other to account and holding partners to account; and
- d) providing reports to full Council at appropriate junctures to keep Members updated as to progress of implementation.

It has been agreed that the SIG will be chaired by an Independent Chair and that it will also be supported by an Independent Facilitator. Suggestions of individuals to fulfil these two roles have been received from those with lived experience and from the Local Government Association (LGA) through September and the SIG members have agreed the individuals that they would like to fulfil these roles and approaches have been made to these individuals.

3.9.3 The members of the SIG have identified preferred individuals to fulfil the role of independent Chair and the role of Independent Facilitator for the SIG. Contact has been made with these individuals to assess whether or not they are willing and able to fulfil the roles. Discussions are ongoing and it is hoped that these discussions will conclude shortly.

3.9.4 CSE Partners Operations Group

This group is intended to bring partners together and is the forum for representatives from the respective internal operational groups to come together and update on progress of implementation and discuss how those actions that are cross-cutting can be implemented. Again, it is intended that this group will be independently chaired and, we are now in a position to provide towards engaging someone to fulfil this role. Council is asked to delegate authority to the Director: Policy & Governance to take the necessary steps to secure an individual to fulfil this role.

3.9.5 Cross-Party Member Liaison Group

It is proposed that, to introduce additional scrutiny to the process, a cross-party Member Group is formed to review progress against the action plan. To be effective, it is proposed that this group will be made up of one member from each political group. Group Leaders received an invitation to nominate a member to this group in the summer. To date of publication of this report we have received two nominations and there remains one vacancy.

3.9.6 Scrutiny Assembly

The implementation of recommendations is, clearly, a priority for the Council and partners and there is a desire for the process to be as transparent as possible. As a result, it is intended that scrutiny assembly will be given an opportunity (roughly every 6 months) to review the action taken in respect of implementation. Members will know that scrutiny has an ability to invite partners to attend meetings to give an account of actions they have taken and it is proposed that representatives from partner organisations will be invited to attend scrutiny assembly meetings.

3.9.7 Full Council

It is proposed that a report will be presented to full Council approximately every 6 months so that there is further opportunity to review progress against implementation. It is expected that the SIG will prepare reports for consideration by full Council including a final report to confirm that actions have been implemented and recommending that Mr Crowther is invited to return to Telford and Wrekin to review implementation of recommendations.

3.9.8 Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership

As mentioned earlier in this report, the Safeguarding Partnership is responsible for the partnership response to children's safeguarding. The Safeguarding Partnership has a statutory responsibility to ensure adequate arrangements are in place across the Borough for the safeguarding of children. The Safeguarding Partnership has agreed to the governance model outlined above and shown in **Appendix A**. It should be noted this governance model includes a reporting line to the Safeguarding Partnership to ensure oversight and assurance using the existing governance structures within the Partnership.

3.10 **Council-related recommendations**

As well as the activity outlined above, some progress has already been made against some of the recommendations contained within the Report. These are summarised below.

3.10.1 Recommendation 1 – Establish a Joint CSE Review Group

This is a multi-agency recommendation but requires specific actions of both the Council and West Mercia Police before being progressed on a multi-agency basis. To date, the Council's Business Insight team has commenced reviewing the current datasets available to the Council to establish what, if anything, needs to be developed to ensure that data meets the points raised by the Inquiry. Once this has been completed, the SIG will be asked to consider the datasets and suggestions for future data. The assessment of, and updating to, datasets includes the data referred to in Recommendations 4 and 5.

3.10.2 Once the datasets have been agreed, the SIG will be asked to work with partners to agree an annual report template in accordance with Recommendation 2.

3.10.3 Recommendation 6 – Information Sharing training between partners

This recommendation is also cross-organisational. However, in order to undertake training on information sharing, there is a need for robust information sharing arrangements to be in place between partners. To that end, the current information sharing agreement has been reviewed and re-signed off pending a wider review by all partners. Although not mentioned in any recommendations, the Council will also be seeking a review of how partners demonstrate that they have discharged their responsibilities under section 11 Children Act 2004 particularly as changes will be made to processes and procedures following the implementation of recommendations. This also links to recommendation 14 concerning information sharing within, and with, schools. It also links to recommendation 20 regarding sexual health screening.

3.10.4 Recommendation 7 - Budget commitment to fund CATE

This recommendation requires the Council to make an ongoing funding commitment to the CATE (Children Abused Through Exploitation) team. At Cabinet on 14 July 2022, the Leader made a commitment to continue to fund CATE, in accordance with the recommendation, for as long as the administration is in place. This has now been picked up as part of the budget-planning process to ensure that this is taken into account through the budget-setting process and included in the medium term financial strategy.

3.10.5 Recommendation 9 – Review of partnership sub-groups

Again, this is another cross-organisational recommendation and relates, specifically, to the Safeguarding Partnership. Partners have commenced discussions around the governance arrangements of the Safeguarding Partnership; this meeting was facilitated by an independent facilitator. This will help shape the review of the sub-groups. It should be recognised that the sub-groups are not solely concerned with child sexual exploitation as the Safeguarding Partnership has a wider remit in respect of child safeguarding and there are statutory requirements that the partnership must satisfy. The new proposed arrangements will be shared with the SIG for comment.

3.10.6 Recommendation 10 – Review of CATE Pathway

This recommendation comprises a number of actions, the first being an initial review of the CATE pathway to ensure that it fully articulates the model of response provided including the circumstances in which a child that is the subject of a Child Protection Plan can receive support via the CATE Pathway, and vice versa. That initial review has been carried out and the CATE pathway document has been updated to accurately reflect how the service is delivered and, in particular, to reflect that the CATE Pathway and statutory safeguarding pathways are not mutually exclusive. The remaining actions will be completed as part of the work required for the action plan.

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3.10.7 Recommendation 13 – external audit of case files

There are many stages that make up a 'case' within either the Safeguarding team or the CATE team. For example, multi-agency meetings, child protection conferences (where needed), working with children young people and their families and similar. Since publication of the Inquiry report, the Council has commenced internal audits of multi-agency meetings so that a benchmark can be set and trends identified. This will help frame the wider piece of work recommended by the Independent Chair in respect of external audits of case files. Consideration will now be given as to how to secure the services of an external organisation, with appropriate specialist expertise, to undertake this work. For the purpose of assurance, however, it should be noted that through the process of Ofsted inspections, casework is reviewed and assessed.

3.10.8 Recommendation 15 – working with parents as partners

The Independent Chair's recommendation in this regard is that the Council should treat parents of children subject to/at risk of sexual exploitation as partners. This is something that the Council always endeavours to achieve and is reflected in the current pathways used by the Council. However, the way in which work is carried out with parents and the way that they are kept informed is something that will be reviewed and it has been agreed that the Independent Lived Experience Consultees will be involved with this piece of work to help review and inform the information shared with parents at the outset of working with a young person and throughout. It should be noted, however, that there may be times when the circumstances in any given case mean that working with parents as partners may not be possible.

3.10.9 Recommendation 16 – review of social care cases to ensure interventions are reasonable

This recommendation relates to the possibility that social workers may have unconscious bias towards parents who may have experienced sexual exploitation as a child or young person. There are difficulties in being able to identify cases that involve children whose parents have had experience of exploitation but work is ongoing in this respect. The recommendation requires training to be given to tackle unconscious bias if any trends are identified. However, the council believes this recommendation does not go far enough as unconscious bias should form a fundamental part of training for any social worker even if there is no trend identified. The Council's mandatory training programme includes unconscious bias training – this extends to **all** staff. Furthermore, the Council intends to link this recommendation to recommendation 13 (see above) to ensure that the presence of any undue bias is considered in any external audit carried out.

3.10.10 Recommendation 17 – Counselling for victims/survivors

This recommendation requires the Council to commit to the provision of contingency funding for continued access to counselling for affected victims/survivors following the publication of the Report. This is something that the Council had already put in place in anticipation of the Report being published.

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Throughout the Inquiry process, counselling was made available through an independent, confidential counselling service, Base 25 to support those who wanted to give evidence to the Inquiry. Arrangements have been made with Base 25 to continue to provide counselling to those who are affected by the publication of the report. This counselling is available to anyone within the Borough, irrespective of age or personal circumstances and, as well as survivors, can also be accessed by those whose family members have been exploited and those who have worked with survivors and their families.

3.10.11 Recommendation 19 – Youth Support

This recommendation requires the Council to collaborate with external organisations who may be able to offer youth services. Work has started on this recommendation by mapping out exactly what provision exists within the Borough from all organisations, such as the Council, community groups and the voluntary sector. This will then help to inform discussions around any gaps in the youth offer and how these can be addressed.

3.10.12 Recommendation 21 – updated method of reporting concerns

The Independent Chair has recommended that the Council provide a mechanism for reporting concerns anonymously. The ICT department has been instructed to look at online web forms for reporting purposes which do not require personal details of the complainant. However, whilst the recommendation is silent in this regard, it is essential that appropriate training is in place to ensure that relevant staff have the skills to attribute appropriate weight to any anonymous complaints

3.10.13 Recommendation 22 – review complaints process

The Council undertook a review of its complaints process for dealing with complaints about the handling of CSE cases in anticipation of the publication of the Inquiry's report. This review was undertaken to enable the Council to respond to any immediate complaints received following publication of the Report. However, it was expected that there would need to be a further review following the Report being published and the SIG will be involved in helping to shape that process.

3.10.14 Recommendation 23 – Working with neighbouring licensing authorities

In essence, this recommendation recognised the good practice of the licensing team in respect of steps taken to tackle CSE and requires the Council to work with neighbouring authorities to seek agreement to taking an identical approach to things such as CSE training for taxi and hackney carriage drivers, taxi standards and pricing structures. Letters have been sent to Leaders and Chief Executives of our three neighbouring authorities seeking a meeting to progress discussions on these points. Positive responses have been received from two of the three authorities concerned and further contact has been made with the third whom has yet to respond. Officers are ready to meet with their counterparts from these authorities at the earliest opportunity.

3.10.15 Recommendation 28 – Explore implementation of CCTV in taxis

The Council had already started work on a pilot scheme to encourage installation of CCTVs in taxis, having recently updated its policy on CCTV usage in taxis. The first CCTV system has recently been installed in a hackney carriage vehicle which operates regularly from outside Pussycats Nightclub in Wellington. The licensing team is continuing to engage with drivers and operators to increase take up of CCTV installation as part of the pilot. The outcome of the pilot scheme will help to influence next steps and inform the consultation with the trade as set out in the recommendation.

3.11 **West Mercia Police recommendations**

3.11.1 Recommendation 3 – WMP to prepare mapping and prevalence data

West Mercia Police (WMP) already collates data in relation to CSE but work is ongoing to ensure such data meets the requirements of the Inquiry recommendations. WMP have allocated this work to its Strategy, Planning & Insight team. It is intended that the first tranche of data will be available from January 2023 and updated on a 6 monthly basis. This links to recommendations 1 and 2 (see above).

3.11.2 Recommendation 6 – information sharing training between partners

There is already training in place across the workforce which is focused on the recognition of vulnerability and this being flagged to WMPs Harm Assessment Unit. Colleagues in the Harm Assessment Unit are specially trained in information sharing and safeguarding as they do this on behalf of the force. All new recruits receive dedicated input on Vulnerability and Safeguarding which sets out how information should be shared and what is required of officers. Specialists within the Force who deal with Child Protection, CSE and Missing Persons receive additional specialist training in this area and the up skilling of the specialist workforce continues with increased specialist trained officers coming online. Multi-agency 'levels of need' training has also been introduced across the West Mercia area which includes information sharing. This is available to all partners.

3.11.3 National guidance regarding Safeguarding Information sharing for police is being developed by the NPCC Lead for the multi-agency safeguarding hub. This work is being led by WMP Vulnerability and Safeguarding Unit and will shortly be shared with partners across the country and Government departments for consultation. WMP have had success in Hereford utilising 'Working Together' – 'continuum of need for safeguarding' – it is anticipated that this approach would help to fulfil this recommendation. WMP will be sharing this approach with other local authorities in West Mercia to seek agreement to adopting this approach to help inform future training.

3.11.4 Recommendation 8 – Ring-fencing of WMP's CE Team Resource

The Chief Constable is responsible for budgeting responsibilities for WMP and will consider this recommendation in line with the budget-setting process. Resources

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and caseloads are being reviewed based upon data received from the Strategy, Planning and Insight team. However, additional training has already been arranged to improve the knowledge of the current workforce and to support and enhance delivery. This includes training of police staff that they have the skills to gather vital intelligence and can talk to children via Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) conversations. All Missing Persons Coordinators are to attend a Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking Course. Continuing Professional Development is being developed for frontline staff to cover child exploitation, trafficking and the National Referral Mechanism.

3.11.5 Recommendation 20 – sexual health screening

This has been shared and escalated to the National Police Chiefs Advisor on Data Protection Act and Information Sharing for a police position in the first instance, prior to engagement at a local level with the Local Authority and Health.

3.11.6 Recommendation 29 - WMP role in taxi licensing enforcement to be reviewed

Responsibility for taxi licensing enforcement within WMP lies with the Problem Solving Hubs. Work has commenced in the Problem Solving Hubs to review the current process. This will then need to feed into the wider partnership in respect of taxi licensing enforcement.

3.11.7 Recommendation 36 – WMP to review use of CSE marker system

WMPs Information Management Unit currently reviews all crimes/incidents and will allocate markers. Where appropriate, child exploitation coordinators also consider daily reports. An audit is currently underway in respect of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking and this aspect of the Inquiry's recommendations will be considered as part of that audit. Alongside this audit work, WMP is also engaged in a 'reset' exercise and, as part of this, the Vulnerability and Safeguarding Team will ensure relevant training and guidance is in place for all frontline staff regarding markers.

3.11.8 Recommendation 37 – Police officer and staff CSE training to be reviewed

Since commencement of the Inquiry, a vast amount of training has already been delivered. There is also significant amounts of training due for delivery within the next 6 months that should satisfy this recommendation. The position will be reviewed at that point to identify any gaps that need to be addressed. However, currently, the training programme includes the following:-

- Dedicated training for student officers on CSE which includes the signs, symptoms and common myths surrounding child abuse and child sexual exploitation, digital policing, responding to CSE and the national drivers for police services including high profile cases such as Rotherham and, locally, the Inquiry.
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training of frontline staff includes National Referral Mechanism training, modern day slavery and inappropriate language. A week-long professional curiosity course is

attended by a number of staff and, CPD on professional curiosity and CE/CSE is due to be delivered this year.

- In March 2022, officers staff and partners attended training which included the National Referral Mechanism, child exploitation, modern slavery and Operation Innerste (safeguarding of unaccompanied migrant children) – this was delivered jointly by the West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit and the Children’s Society.
- CPD training on Adverse Childhood Experiences including how to adopt a holistic approach to police investigations incorporating the voice of the child.
- Early help officers delivering training to frontline staff on child risk assessments including engagement with children.

3.11.9 Recommendation 38 – Review of WMP complaints handling procedures

The Professional Standards department has commenced work on this recommendation.

3.11.10 Recommendation 39 – review of approach to NRM referrals

This is a multi-agency recommendation. There has recently been a national pilot regarding the NRM (National Referral Mechanism) with a further pilot expected to commence in January 2023. It is anticipated that the decision making in relation to the NRM will be devolved to Local Authorities in respect of children. At present a strategy discussion takes place for each child and the decision is made in relation to the requirement for an NRM referral. Where relevant the NRM is submitted by the LA. As part of the CSE Partner’s Group, discussions will be held with the Local Authority regarding audit/reality testing to ensure the practice now in place is effective and followed. Current training will be reviewed following the outcomes of any audits.

3.12 **Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin ICS recommendations**

For ease of understanding, it should be noted that the ICS has taken the place of the Clinical Commissioning Group which was dissolved on 1 July 2022. The ICS commissions various health providers to deliver health services such as mental health provision, hospital care etc.

3.12.1 Recommendation 42 – Quality of CSE training

The ICS have commenced the first stage of this recommendation by seeking copies of all children’s safeguarding training content from local health providers. This will allow a review to be undertaken of the quality, consistency and content of such training. The intention is to achieve a universal standard for safeguarding training across all local health providers. In addition to this, the ICS has started work on designing a specific CSE case file audit.

Further, Children’s Safeguarding Quality Assurance visits have commenced since the creation of the ICS on 1 July 2022. These Quality Assurance visits include themes from the Inquiry and recommendations relating to CSE with action plans

for NHS providers to complete. To date, visits have been made to Robert Jones Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Foundation Trust and the British Pregnancy Advisory Service. Visits to BeeU (children and adolescent mental health service) and sexual health services are planned in the forthcoming months. These QA visits include CSE questions to ensure that staff know how to identify the signs of CSE and know how to refer cases.

System-wide GP training on CSE commenced on 21 September 2022 delivered by named GPs and the Deputy Designate Safeguarding Nurse. Informal feedback on this training has been positive. This session has also been recorded so that it can be utilised across the wider primary care service. It includes CSE case studies, videos, explorative questions and a minimum pass mark is set.

3.12.2 Recommendation 43 – Improvements to trauma-related mental health services

The ICS is working with the Director of Delivery and transformation to ensure that the offer to victims and survivors of CSE, who need trauma-related mental health services, is part of the planned commissioning arrangements. The ICS has also asked NHS England to nominate a lead for commissioning in the area to work as part of the working group on this point.

The local Mental Health Trust (MPFT) delivers trauma-informed care training to staff which is endorsed by the Care Quality commission. Additional resource requirements are being scoped and identified to help further improve local service provision. MPFT have also produced a specialist video looking into trauma-informed care which can be used in trauma-informed care training workshops.

3.12.3 Recommendation 45 – Guidance for sexual health clinics responsible for giving sexual health advice to be reviewed

Work is ongoing to review processes within sexual health clinics and health providers giving sexual health advice. Moving forward, children's safeguarding nurses will ensure that the Inquiry recommendations are incorporated into service specifications for future procurement purposes.

British Pregnancy Advice Service have confirmed that all young people under the age of 18 are subject to a supportive review of any safeguarding needs and this includes exploration of the young person's needs and experiences.

3.12.4 Recommendation 46 – GPs to be consulted about CSE data collection

This recommendation relates to flagging CSE concerns on a child's medical records as well as raising this issue at a regional and national level. The current practice, if a child is known to be at risk of/subject to CSE a template letter is sent to the child's GP practice to alert medical practitioners that the child/young person is at risk of CSE. This letter is attached to child's electronic record and/or placed in the patient's notes which ensures that the letter transfer to a new GP practice if the child relocates.

This recommendation also required the ICS to raise the issue of flagging CSE concerns on a child's GP records at national and regional meetings. The ICS has raised with NHS England the issue of CSE data recording in accordance with the recommendation. Additionally, the ICS safeguarding leads have initiated discussions with regional NHS England safeguarding leads to explore a national digital solution to this challenge.

3.12.5 Recommendation 47 – GPs to implement review system for children moving practice

As well as the actions identified at paragraph 3.11.4 above, GP practices have been asked to record data on the number of children and young people considered to be at risk of/subject to CSE and to ensure records are flagged accordingly. As mentioned above, digital recording issues are under development and NHS England has been approached to explore this at a national level. In the meantime, the ICS has designated named GPs to devise a surgery QA visit schedule to cover this subject.

3.13 **West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner recommendations**

3.13.1 Recommendation 40 – commit to continued funding for CSE initiatives

These initiatives are currently funded through individual Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) based on their assessment of need. For 22/23, Telford & Wrekin CSP are being funded £16,000 for Taxi Marshalls, and £7,190 for Street Pastors. CSP funding overall, has been committed to 31st March 2025, subject to conditions around strategy for achieving outcomes & evidence based proposals.

The PCC recently held a CSP Summit bringing together CSP Chairs from across the force area. The agenda included an IITCSE paper summarising the recommendations from the inquiry such that learning could be shared with all areas. The CSP Chairs reflected on their local experiences in relation to taxi marshalls, taxi licensing and street pastors. The views shared at the CSP summit will be used to inform ongoing discussion and review of current provision of these initiatives across West Mercia. The CSP Summits are held bi-annually, with the next meeting to be scheduled in March/April 2023.

3.13.2 Recommendation 41 – Holding to Account meetings

The PCC will have a formal holding to account meeting in March 2023. The meeting will enable the PCC to hold the Chief Constable to account for progress in delivering activity against police-led recommendations. The terms of reference for the meeting will be informed by the detail set out under recommendation 41.

The PCC is also interested in exploring opportunities and mechanisms for incorporating partnership / public scrutiny into the holding to account process. This will be subject to discussion at future Strategic Implementation Group meetings.

The PCC has a statutory role around reviews of police complaints. This process must be considered in the context of recommendation 41.3. The sharing of

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information relating to complaints in CSE cases cannot compromise (or be seen to compromise) lawful, statutory process in respect of PCC complaint reviews.

4.0 Comments from partners

4.1 Partners have been invited to provide comments in relation to this report. These are detailed below.

4.2 Comments from the independent lived experience consultants

As individuals who have experienced sexual exploitation as children, we understand the trauma and long-lasting impact such experiences can have. We are committed to doing everything that we can to raise awareness of CSE, support people who are currently being exploited or have been exploited in the past. Additionally, we have experience of supporting organisations, including national government, in reviewing the measures in place to address CSE and trafficking within the UK and are pleased to be asked to work with the Council in supporting the implementation of recommendations. Whilst we are in the early stages of that process, we believe that the Council is committed to implementing the recommendations and being subject to critical challenge from us (and others). We are satisfied that the governance model that has been developed is one which will allow the Council and partners to effectively engage with each other and with us to ensure that all parties are working towards the aim of implementing all recommendations.

4.3 Comments from West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner

A full plan has been developed for implementation within the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, in respect of addressing recommendations arising from the IITCSE report.

The report contains 2 PCC-led recommendations (no 40. and no.41). An update on these recommendations has been provided. While other recommendations are primarily focused on other organisations the PCC has considered the implications of all the recommendations, given his statutory roles in police governance and ensuring local priorities are joined up. The action plan developed captures PCC input to all relevant recommendations, and is intended to ensure improvements are delivered right across West Mercia, not just in Telford & Wrekin. The PCC's team will work to deliver the action plan in the coming months and provide regular feedback on progress to the PCC through governance structures in place internally and externally. The expectation is that there will be further work that is identified to ensure that appropriate governance structures, processes and support are in place to tackle CSE across West Mercia.

5.0 Key Risks

5.1 There is a risk associated with this report in so much as the implementation of some of the recommendations require budget commitment. At a time of economic turbulence, there is a risk that the actions needed to implement recommendations are not sustainable in the long term; this applies to all partners. However, as part

of the ongoing financial management measures for each organisations, there will be a need to review priorities and make decisions in accordance with the economic circumstances at the time. The Council has made it clear that it is committed to implementing all recommendations relating to it and this will be taken into account through the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

6.0 Council Priorities

6.1 This report supports the following council priorities:-

- Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community.
- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 A number of recommendations made in the Report will have cost implications which will need to be considered as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

8.0 Legal and HR Implications

8.1 The Council has the legal power to secure services from a wide range of organisations and individuals to enable it to carry out its functions. The proposals contained in this report are in line with these legal powers.

8.2 Ultimately, it will be a matter for the independent Chair of the Independent Inquiry to reach a conclusion as to the effectiveness, or otherwise, of the implementation. Whilst there are no legislative provisions setting out how best to manage projects of this nature, the robust governance structure described in this report will support the Council, and partners, in demonstrating that appropriate actions have been completed.

9.0 Ward Implications

9.1 Although there are no direct ward implications arising from the proposals contained in this report, it is clear that the ongoing implementation of recommendations will impact upon those living in all wards within the Borough.

10.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

10.1 There is significant evidence demonstrating that children and young people who experience CSE suffer significant and long-lasting trauma throughout their lives. Evidence suggests that many (although not all) who experience CSE are more likely to have less positive life outcomes than those who have not; this includes lower educational attainment, difficulty building and maintaining secure relationships, difficulty securing employment, mental health challenges and substance abuse.

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10.2 The proposals set out in this report are the first step in strengthening the response offered to tackle CSE across the Borough by all agencies with safeguarding duties.

11.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

11.1 The implementation of recommendations will include consideration of equality and diversity matters as actions are progressed.

12.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

12.1 There are environmental impacts associated with holding meetings in person as a result of carbon emissions. However, where appropriate, meetings will be held remotely or as a hybrid meeting.

12.2 Wherever possible, papers relating to meetings will be shared electronically only.

13.0 Background Papers

1. Cabinet Report of 13 October 2022 – Independent Inquiry Update Report

15.0 Appendices

Appendix A Governance Model

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Legal	29/10/2022	31/10/2022	RP
Finance	29/10/2022	31/10/2022	MB
Cabinet Lead	29/10/2022	02/11/2022	LC