



## Reducing Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy 2017 – 2020

### 1. Introduction

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse and child abuse is a crime. CSE destroys lives and affects all our communities. It is recognised nationally as one of the most important challenges facing local agencies today.

Developing a co-ordinated response to CSE in Surrey is therefore a priority for the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) and its partners. This strategy outlines a framework for the development of robust, co-ordinated multi-agency responses to CSE across Surrey. It has been agreed by all partners who are equally committed to prevent the sexual exploitation of children in Surrey.

The delivery of this strategy supports the SSCB's statutory duties to co-ordinate activities to safeguard and to promote the welfare of children in Surrey, as well as ensuring the effectiveness of what is being done by partners. It fully aligns with Surrey County Council's and Surrey Police's wider improvement work.

### 2. Our vision

**Surrey Children are protected from child sexual exploitation  
and feel safe in their communities.**

### 3. What is Child Sexual Exploitation?

The SSCB has adopted the nationally agreed definition published by the Department of Education in 2017 outline below.

**Table 1: CSE – Definition**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity

- In exchange of something the victim needs or wants and/or
- For the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

(Department for Education, 2017)

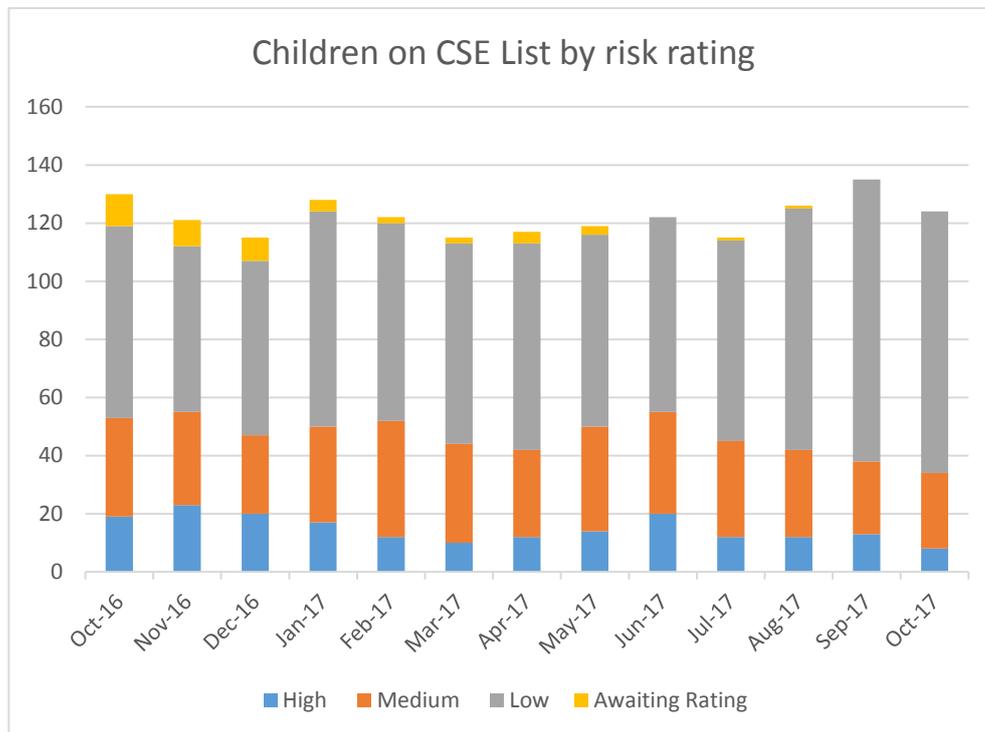
## 4. The Surrey Context

*What do we know about children at risk of/experiencing CSE and perpetrators?*

The number of children at risk of or experiencing CSE known to partner agencies has remained broadly static over the last 12 months. In October 2016, we were aware of 130 children who were at risk of or experiencing CSE in Surrey. In October 2017, the figure was 124.

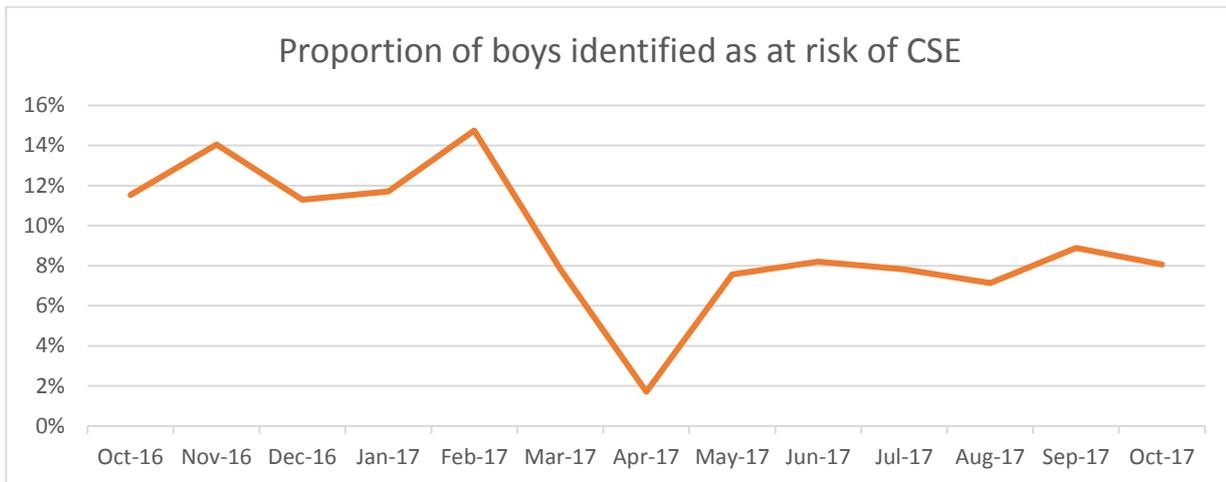
As the tables below shows, the majority of children are assessed as being at low risk of CSE. The proportion of children assessed as high risk has reduced from 14% in October 2016 to 6.45% in October 2017.

**Table 1: Numbe of children at risk of or experiencing CSE known to services by risk rating (October 2016 – October 2017)**



Both the number and proportion of boys identified as at risk of or experiencing CSE has dropped in the last 12 months from 12% in October 2016 to 8% in October 2017 (15 to 10 respectively).

**Table 2: Proportion of boys identified as being at risk of CSE and known to services (October 2016 – October 2017)**



Reflecting national findings, children at risk of/experiencing CSE in Surrey often face a range of additional vulnerabilities. The most recent problem profile (November 2016) suggested that:

- 90% of children were either recorded as a Missing Person or as having absence from school
- 60% of the children had education support of some description
- 75% of children were eligible for free school meals
- 60% associated with another child who was at risk of CSE
- 37% are or have been looked after

We will continue to undertake routine problem profiles in order to better understand the needs of our cohort. This will allow us to identify the most effective ways to reduce CSE in Surrey, protect victims and pursue and prosecute perpetrators.

*What do we know about the quality of existing responses to CSE in Surrey?*

We know that responses to CSE in Surrey need to improve. In January 2017, an Ofsted monitoring visit concluded that:

- There is demonstrable progress in improve the strategic arrangements for children at risk of sexual exploitation. A new strategy and action plan are now in place.
- Child sexual exploitation risk assessment are evidence in the majority of cases, but vary in quality, with limited analysis and safety planning
- Managers have been particularly effective in challenging the use of language by professionals that had previously suggested a lack of understanding of child sexual exploitation.

Children and their families have furthermore told us about their wish for services to engage in a way that is non-judgmental and is consistent and supportive.

## 5. Our Principles

The following principles have been agreed by all partners and will underpin the multi-agency response to CSE in Surrey. The principles have been informed by the 'See me, Hear me' framework devised by the Office of the Children's Commissioner for England (OCC)<sup>1</sup> and reflect 'Safer Surrey' principles.

1. We will listen to and learn from children, their families and friends who have been affected by CSE and provide messages for both professionals and other children at risk of CSE to influence and improve practice!
2. Victims of CSE cannot consent to their abuse, and there cannot be any scenarios in which victims are viewed as young women or men making informed choices!
3. Strategic and operational decisions will be based on the best available data, feedback from children and their families as well as and insights from across the partnership. Our efforts will be focussed on the most effective ways of supporting and improving the front-line response!
4. We will employ a wider range of initiatives aimed at increasing children's and the wider community's understanding of CSE and develop targeted approaches to engage those children most at risk.

## 6. Our approach: What we will do to address CSE in Surrey

CSE will only be addressed effectively if robust multi-agency responses are in place. Our approach balances the need to **prevent** CSE of those most at risk, **support** those who are victims of CSE, as well as direct actions to **disrupt** and prevent perpetrators.

We have agreed five outcomes which will help us to achieve our vision of ensuring children in Surrey are protected from CSE and feel safe in their communities. These are:

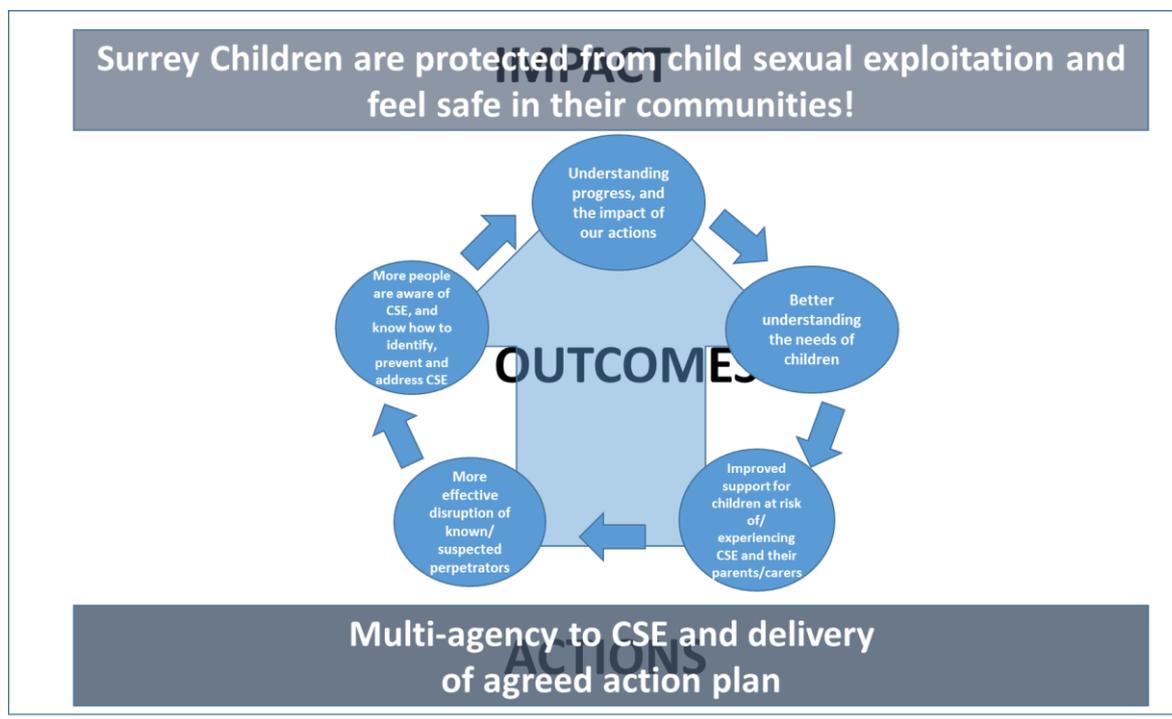
- **Outcome 1:** Understanding progress, and the impact of our actions
- **Outcome 2:** Better understanding the needs of children
- **Outcome 3:** Improved support for children at risk of/experiencing CSE and their parents/carers
- **Outcome 4:** More effective disruption of known/suspected perpetrators
- **Outcome 5:** More people are aware of CSE ,and know how to identify, prevent and address CSE

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<sup>1</sup> Berelowitz, S. et al (2013). "If only someone had listened" *The Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups Final Report*. London: Office of the Children's Commissioner.

This is outlined in more detail below.

**Table 3: CSE Action Plan – Overview**



## **7. How this will be achieved – governance and delivery**

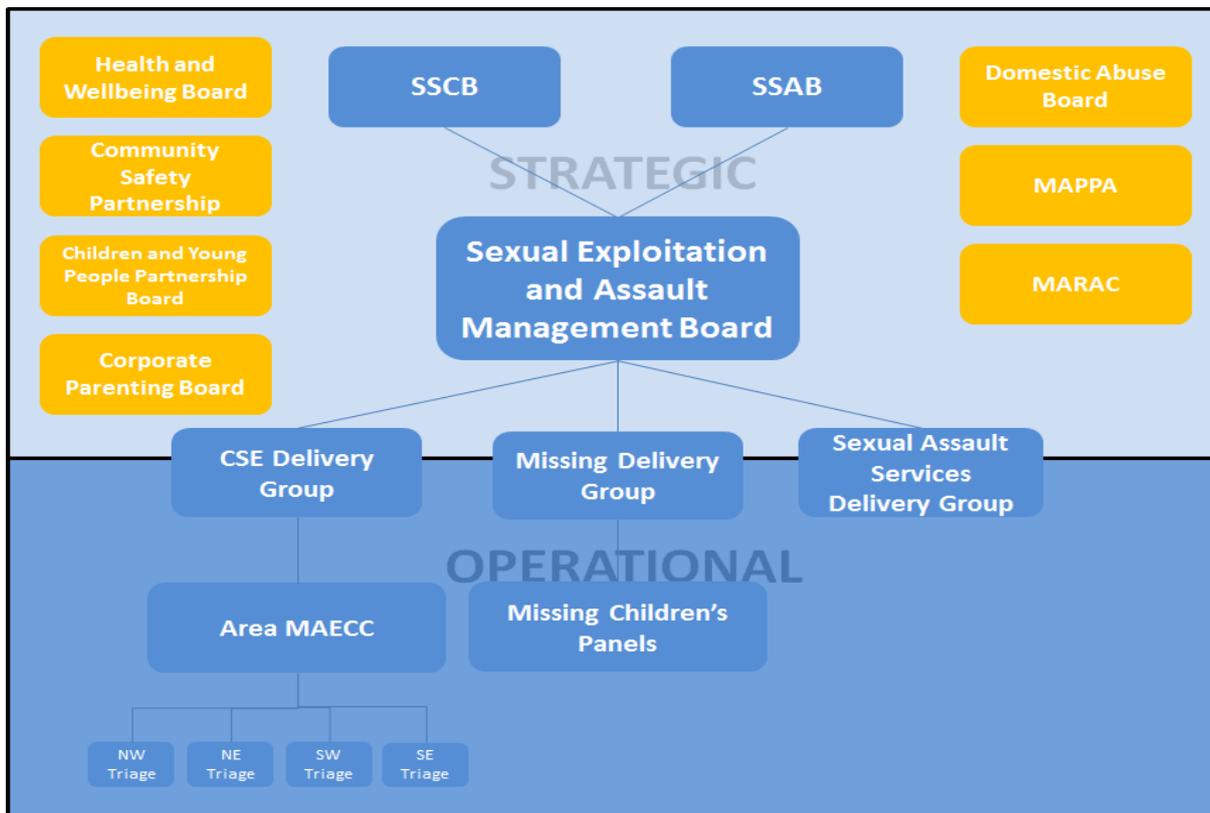
The effective implementation of the action plan is dependent on robust governance and delivery structures.

At the strategic level, the Sexual Exploitation and Assault Management Board (SEAMB) is responsible for scrutinising the delivery of agreed actions. The SEAMB will put in place mechanisms to monitor progress and measure the impact of activity as well as ensuring the action plan remains fit for purpose. The day-to-day delivery of actions is overseen by the CSE Delivery Group.

The SEAMB is accountable to the SSCB, and will provide regular updates, appropriate assurance and assessment of impact.

At operational level, the weekly multi-agency CSE Risk Management Meetings (RMMs) will ensure a joined-up response to children who are at risk of/experiencing sexual exploitation.

**Table 4: CSE Governance Structure**



This strategy does not replace existing single-agency governance and operating procedures. Each agency retains responsibility for safeguarding children at risk of or victims of CSE.