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**OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee has undertaken :-

**Work Programme**

2. We continue to give consideration to the Work Programme for this Committee and taking into account the ambitious programme of change across the Council and the key role of Scrutiny in ensuring that the programme is able to deliver the service improvements and the budget savings necessary.
3. I met with the relevant officers, along with the Vice-Chair, to discuss the Financial Sustainability of Local Authorities report from the National Audit Office. Officers and examined in particular the spend for Children's Social Care which had increased. We discussed in detail the reasons for this and will continue monitor the position through the Budget Consultation Process.
4. With regard to future items for the work programme, we intend to look at Pupil Premium Issues and Wider Support and SEN funding formula and an update on the position with Academies in the Borough.

**Sexual Exploitation and Missing from Home**

5. We received two presentations in relation to Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation in Darlington and Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation and also viewed a DVD entitled 'Innocence', produced by Barnardo's to highlight the grooming process and stages of sexual exploitation i.e. targeting stage, friendship forming stage, loving relationship stage and finally the abusive relationship stage.
6. A Sexual Exploitation Worker from Barnardo's gave the first presentation on Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation which included some background to sexual exploitation, which is a national problem, and the Tackling Child Exploitation Action Plan and the multi-agency working which is being undertaken to erase sexual exploitation of young people.
7. The presentation also highlighted the vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse i.e. domestic violence, living in chaotic or dysfunctional households, low self-esteem, young carers, history of abuse, recent bereavement or loss and other reasons; and also highlighted the signs and behaviour in young people already involved in Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) i.e missing from home or care, thoughts of or attempts at suicide, drug or alcohol abuse, self harm, poor mental health, absence from school, offending and many other signs.

8. Durham Constabulary gave the second presentation on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and what is being done in Darlington to tackle CSE.
9. The Presentation outlined what is CSE; the Sexual Violence Strategy launched in 2011; the multi agencies involved in CSE and ways to prevent CSE using local analysis and the development of Teacher Training Packs, SRE toolkit and community engagement; the purpose of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH); how perpetrators are tackled in Darlington including the use of experienced safeguarding detectives and problem solving techniques CSE Events; information sharing and the promotion of information sharing; and raising awareness and training to include educational school packs, promotion in the community including parents, raising awareness with professionals and sustainability of funding.
10. Discussion ensued on the emerging trends in Darlington and the Models which included sexual activity exchanged for alcohol and drugs; street based grooming links to alcohol; inappropriate relationships with teens and older males; and internet, social media, mobile phones; and were advised that there was nothing to suggest that there are any organisations behind grooming or gangs in Darlington.

#### **Co-Opted Members – Community Representatives**

11. Councillors Taylor, Kelley and Wright met on 30 August, 2013 to consider five applications for the position of Community Representative and agreed to appoint Emma Coltman and Sajna Miah.

**Councillor Eleanor Lister**  
**Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**