

Report to COUNCIL

Annual Report of the Elected Member Steering Group on Child Sexual Exploitation

Portfolio Holder:

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Reason for Decision

That Full Council receive the Annual Report from the Elected Member Steering Group on Child Sexual Exploitation and agree proposals to change the terms of reference for the Steering Group to include all constituted political groups and any elected members with portfolio or shadow portfolio responsibilities for children's services.

Executive Summary

Following the publication of the independent assurance review into historic safeguarding practice, Oldham Council established a cross party Elected member Steering Group on Child Sexual Exploitation.

The Steering Group committed, as part of its terms of reference to provide a summary of its activity to Full Council on an annual basis. This report seeks to present that summary to Full Council (at Appendix A).

The report also seeks to agree changes to the terms of reference established in 2022 to reflect the changing political landscape within Oldham Council and ensure representation from all political groups. These changes are outlined in a proposed updated terms of reference at Appendix B.

Recommendations

- That Council formally receives the Annual Report of the Elected Member Steering Group on Child Sexual Exploitation detailing the assurance work undertaken in the last twelve months.
- That Council agree the proposed changes to the Steering Group's terms of reference to;
 - Extend the membership of the group to include two representatives from each political group,
 - That the two group representatives on the Steering Group will be the Group Leader and, where the role exists within that group, the member with portfolio or shadow portfolio responsibilities for children and young people.
 - Where no such role exists within a group the Group Leader will determine the second member.

Annual Report of the Elected Member Steering Group on Child Sexual Exploitation

1 Background

- 1.1 Following the publication of the independent assurance review into historic safeguarding practice in Oldham in June 2022 Oldham Council established a cross-party Elected Member Steering Group on Child Sexual Exploitation.
- 1.2 The cross-party steering group provides oversight and assurance of current safeguarding practice and of our support for victims and survivors of current and historic child sexual abuse.
- 1.3 At its establishment the Group committed (as part of its terms of reference) to report annually on its work to Full Council. This report includes that first annual summary of activity for consideration.
- 1.4 The Group's terms of reference also ask that any changes to the terms of reference be agreed at a meeting of Full Council.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 The Elected Member Steering Group on Child Sexual Exploitation meets four times per municipal year. It is chaired by the Chief Executive with representatives from Labour, The Liberal Democrats, Conservatives and the Failsworth Independent Group.
- 2.2 The current membership, as outlined in the Groups terms of reference, includes two representatives from each of the political groups that were represented on Oldham Council in Autumn 2022.
- 2.3 During 2023 two new political groups are now represented on Oldham Council but are currently not represented under the Steering Group's current terms of reference.
- 2.4 The membership of the Group currently includes Group Leaders but does not specify the membership of any portfolio or shadow portfolio holder for children's and young people. The updated terms of reference specifically ask for their inclusion in future membership, where the role exists within a group, to ensure assurance and oversight within the relevant portfolio.

3 Options/Alternatives

- 3.1 That Full Council agree the proposed changes to the Group's terms of reference ensuring representation with two members from all political groups on Oldham Council. The proposed changes also state that Group Leaders from each political group will be a member of the group, alongside, where the role exists, the portfolio or shadow portfolio holder for children and young people. Where that role does not

exist within a group the Group Leader will determine the second steering group member.

- 3.2 That Full Council not agree the proposed changes to the Group's terms of reference which would leave a number of political groups unrepresented on the Steering Group.

4 Preferred Option

- 4.1 That Full Council receive the Annual Report of the Elected Member Steering Group on Child Sexual Exploitation (at Appendix B) and agree the proposed changes to the Steering Group's terms of reference (at Appendix B), ensuring cross-party assurance and oversight of the council's work on complex safeguarding and exploitation.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 None

7 Legal implications

- 7.1 None

8. Co-operative Implications

- 8.1 None

9 Human Resource implications

- 9.1 None

10 Risk Assessments

- 10.1 None

11 IT Implications

- 11.1 None

12 Property Implications

- 12.1 None

13 Procurement Implications

- 13.1 None

14 Environmental and Health & Safety Implications

- 14.1 None

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- 15 **Community cohesion, including crime and disorder implications in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**
- 15.1 None
- 16 **Equality Impact – including implications for Children and Young People**
- 16.1 No
- 17 **Key Decision**
- 17.1 No
- 19 **Background Papers**
- 19.1 None
- 20 **Appendices**
- 20.1 Appendix A – Annual Report of the Elected Member Steering Group on Child Sexual Exploitation
- 20.2 Appendix B – Proposed terms of reference Elected Member Steering Group on Child Sexual Exploitation