

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) Meeting

Operating Protocol and Terms of Reference- August 2017

<p>Introduction:</p>	<p>The interim report of the Children’s Commissioner’s enquiry into child sexual exploitation (CSE) in gangs and groups identified at least 16,500 children as being at risk of sexual exploitation across England during one year.</p> <p>2,409 children were confirmed as victims of sexual exploitation in gangs and groups during the 14 month period from August 2010 to October 2011, described by the enquiry as a significant under estimate of the numbers (<i>“ I thought I was the only one. The only one in the world” The office of the Children’s Commissioner’s inquiry into child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups (OCC November 2012)</i>)</p> <p>In March 2015, the government announced new measures to tackle CSE. This included prioritising child sexual abuse as a national threat.</p> <p>In the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, the monthly MASE meeting provides tactical oversight of CSE cases and is a framework to allow regular information sharing and action planning to tackle child sexual exploitation. The meeting discusses referrals of concern where there are issues that prevent the case progressing, where children are deemed to be “high risk” and to identify themes, and trends in relation to</p>
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	<p>CSE. This may include the identification of perpetrators/ offenders, and the involvement of gangs/groups linked to CSE as well as locations of concern.</p>
<p>Aim and Purpose of the Meeting:</p>	<p>The MASE meeting aims to ensure an appropriate strategic response to CSE across the multi-agency partnership.</p> <p>The purpose of the MASE meeting is to have tactical oversight of CSE cases, information, intelligence and activity in Barking and Dagenham</p> <p>MASE discussions focus on the “VOLT”; Victim, Offender, Locations, and Trends.</p> <p>The key function of the MASE meeting is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have tactical oversight of CSE cases, information, intelligence and activity in Barking and Dagenham and across borough boundaries. • To remove blockages or obstacles in cases, as well as considering and directing resources and activity in response to trends identified from those cases. • To apply pro-active problem solving to address the risks associated with victims, offenders, locations, and trends (VOLT). This includes removing blockages and obstacles in cases as well as considering and directing resources and activity in response to trends identified from these cases • To identify, discuss and deliver a partnership response to short, medium and long-term themes trends and patterns emerging from CSE cases. • To gather case information and data to feed into and maintain a meaningful local CSE Problem Profile • To work collaboratively to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of children and people who are being, or are at risk of being, sexually exploited. • To take action against those intent on abusing and exploiting children and young people by prosecuting and disrupting perpetrators.

	<p>Where necessary or relevant, information will be shared with other strategic and operational panels such as MARAC, MAPPA, Missing Children and the Gangs Partnership, as agreed by the MASE Chair.</p> <p>Cases should only be presented to the MASE once a Strategy Discussion has been held.</p>
Frequency of Meetings:	The MASE meeting will take place monthly, on the last Wednesday of every month. The duration of the meeting is 2 hours, between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm.
Chair:	<p>The meeting will be co-chaired by the Local Borough Police at Detective Chief Inspector (DCI) or Detective Inspector (DI) level and the Local Authority Group Manager for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance or their Deputy</p> <p>The Co-chairs will be responsible for chairing meetings in turn, but may delegate this responsibility to each other by agreement.</p> <p>The co-chairs are ultimately responsible for the production of the local CSE Problem Profile.</p>
Membership of Meeting:	<p>The following professionals and agencies represent the core membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Local Borough DCI or DI (Chair) • Local Authority Group Manager Safeguarding and Quality Assurance or Deputy (Co-chair) • Police Local Borough CSE SPOC (DS/DC) • Police SCO17 SET SPOC (DS/DC) • Local Authority CSE Co-ordinator • Health SPOC (CCG/ NELFT/ BHRUT) • Missing Children and Children Missing Education SPOC • Youth Offending CSE SPOC • Probation CSE SPOC

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing CSE SPOC • Schools CSE SPOC • Commissioned Services CSE Lead (Barnardo's) • Local Authority MASE Co-ordinator <p>Other agency representatives should be considered and invited as appropriate.</p> <p>All attendees must be in a position of managerial responsibility or have strategic oversight of their area of business.</p>
<p>Information Sharing:</p>	<p>Any information that is shared must be NECESSARY – PROPORTIONATE and RELEVANT and should be provided giving due consideration to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S11 Children Act 2004 obliges relevant agencies to ensure that its “functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children”. • Sec 29 Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998 allows for the disclosure of personal information without consent to detect or prevent a crime. It contains a defined category of public interest-The protection of vulnerable members of the community. Examples of cases meeting this criteria are young people who are vulnerable to or involved in gang activity, vulnerable to child sexual exploitation and victims of domestic abuse. <p>Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is essential for effective identification, assessment, and service provision. • early sharing of information is the key to providing effective early help where there are emerging problems. At the other end of the continuum, sharing information can be essential to put in place

	<p>effective child protection services. Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) have shown how poor information sharing has contributed to the deaths or serious injuries of children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. To ensure effective safeguarding arrangements: • all organisations should have arrangements in place which set out clearly the processes and the principles for sharing information between each other, with other professionals and with the LSCB and • no professional should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to keeping a child safe. If a professional has concerns about a child’s welfare and believes they are suffering or likely to suffer harm, then they should share the information with local authority children’s social care. • <i>Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers (2015)</i> supports frontline practitioners, working in child or adult services, who have to make decisions about sharing personal information on a case by case basis. The guidance can be used to supplement local guidance and encourage good practice in information sharing. See the Department for Education Guidance on Information Sharing <p>MASE minutes, referrals and other documents pertaining to the meeting, that contain sensitive information should be circulated securely, through secure e-mail. Where secure e-mail is not available, documents must be password protected.</p>
<p>Threshold for Referral:</p>	<p>Any child or young person can be nominated for consideration at the MASE where either or both of the following criteria apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where there is reason to believe that information available to the MASE will provide intelligence that will enhance safeguarding and support responses to individual and groups of children and young people and /or enable strategic responses by the multi-agency partnership with regard to prevention, disruption and prosecution by providing intelligence on emerging hotspots, individuals, groups and themes and by enhancing the local profile.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there is a specific issue (or issues) that is preventing a case from progressing or negatively impacting on safeguarding responses and senior manager intervention is required to address this. <p>All cases being referred to MASE must have had a strategy meeting</p> <p>MASE Meetings are not intended to replace strategy or other statutory meetings. Where there are concerns that a child or young person is a risk of significant harm, normal safeguarding processes in line with Part A of the London Child Protection Procedures should be followed.</p>
<p>Referral Process:</p>	<p>The monthly Pre-MASE Meeting, that is held two weeks prior to MASE is the triage and quality assurance system that ensures only the right cases are brought to the attention of the MASE to support an appropriate strategic response by the multi-agency partnership. Terms of reference for Pre-MASE can be located on the CSE Page of Barking and Dagenham LSCB website</p> <p>All CSE Risk Assessments received alongside MARF referrals to MASH and CSE Risk Assessments completed on cases already open to children’s social care should be sent to the MASE mailbox MASEReferrals@lbbd.gov.uk and considered through Pre-MASE to ensure the threshold for MASE is met and that MASE maintains its strategic focus.</p> <p>Nominations for the MASE can also be brought to the Pre-MASE by the Local Police CSE SPOC or SET SPOC who should be aware of all new CSE referrals for the borough.</p> <p>Other professional partners, including colleagues in other Local Authorities placing looked after children in Barking and Dagenham, can refer to the MASE (via Pre-MASE) using the multi-agency CSE Risk Assessment Tool that is also located on the LSCB website.</p> <p>MASE Referral forms should be e-mailed to MASEReferrals@lbbd.gov.uk no later one week before the meeting to allow the membership to research those being discussed within their own data bases in advance. Names will be circulated to MASE members by the MASE Co-ordinator.</p>

	<p>The MASE Co-ordinator is Sasha Timmermans sasha.timmermans@lbbd.gov.uk</p>
<p>Attendance and Administration Arrangements:</p>	<p>The meeting will be administered by the MASE Co-ordinator who will keep a data base of all cases presented to the MASE.</p> <p>Where the MASE Co-ordinator is unavailable, it is the responsibility of the MASE chairs to administer the meeting within local resources and administrative processes. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending invites to meeting attendees and collating responses to these • Recording information shared in the meeting and circulating this to attendees as appropriate. • Feeding back decisions from the meeting to Lead Professionals. <p>Where a core partner is unable to attend a MASE meeting they are expected to nominate an appropriate professional from within their team, service, or organisation to attend in their place. On occasions when this is not possible, apologies for absence should be sent to the MASE co-ordinator in advance of the meeting.</p>
<p>Sharing Intelligence and information in and outside of the Pre-MASE Meeting</p>	<p>Meeting attendees are responsible for researching subjects of the MASE within their own data bases prior to the meeting and for deciding, using their professional judgement and on a case by case basis what information is appropriate to share. Examples of the information and intelligence that may assist the meeting are contained in Appendix A.</p> <p>Where possible attendees should bring their data bases to meetings to research other children and young people as they are identified within the peer network.</p> <p>The representatives for each agency are responsible for agreeing what information/ intelligence should be passed other groups, organisations and strategic meetings in consultation with the MASE Chair, and for progressing this within their own local referral pathways.</p>

	Where the meeting identifies that a child or young person is at risk of harm and that a referral to children's safeguarding is required, the Chair of the meeting will confirm who is responsible for making the referral in accordance with the London Child Protection Procedures timescale and process.
Governance Arrangements	<p>The Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation Group (MASE) is responsible for overseeing partnership activity to safeguard children and young people at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Barking and Dagenham.</p> <p>The MASE reports to the Performance, Learning and Quality Assurance Group (PLQA) that reports directly to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).</p> <p>CSE is a priority for the LSCB and is reported on as part of the Annual Report.</p>
Terms of Reference Agreed	Yes
Date:	December 2017
Date of Review:	December 2018

APPENDIX A

Examples of information that should be brought to the MASE meeting:

- Any cases of children where the CSE concerns are high risk or where information available within the case has some strategic value, for example, cases involving multiple victims and/or perpetrators.
- Cases that have “blockers” that prevent progress and hamper safeguarding responses that require senior manager support to rectify.
- Cases should have been subject to a child protection strategy meeting prior to presentation at MASE.
- Where cases are being presented, the following information about children and young people should be made available where known:
 - Names of child, children, or young person (victim)
 - Dates of Birth
 - Address
 - Details of any siblings
 - Place of Education
 - Allegiances and Disputes with other children and young people including any gang links.
 - Details of any other agencies with whom the child or young person is linked including names of any involved professionals
 - Relevant details of any involvement with your service
 - Details of any vulnerability either of the young person, their siblings or other family members
 - All details of any known perpetrator or suspect
 - Details of any identified location of concern
 - Details of any on-line risks including (but not exclusively) on-line grooming, bullying, and sexting.