

# Warwickshire Safeguarding

Exploitation Strategy  
(2020-2023)

Tackling the Exploitation  
of Children and Adults in  
Warwickshire



Warwickshire  
Safeguarding

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# 1. Introduction & Context

This strategy has been written to ensure that Warwickshire Safeguarding Partnership is working together to foster a greater understanding of exploitation, the impact it has on children, young people, adults with care and support needs, and the wider community, and to improve the lives of those who are at risk.

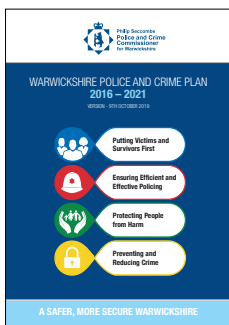
The safeguarding of children, young people and adults with care and support needs from the harm caused by exploitation is a core priority of Warwickshire Safeguarding Partnership. Our approach to tackling the problem must be multi-agency and collaborative to ensure those at risk are protected from harm.

The scope of this strategy crosses the domains of sexual exploitation, missing children, gangs, criminal exploitation, organised crime, cuckooing, trafficking, hate crime and prevent/extremism.

This strategy should be read alongside:



- [‘Somethings Not Right’](#)  
– multi-agency campaign to raise awareness of CSE



- [Warwickshire Police and Crime Plan 2016 - 2021](#)

## Context

The criminal exploitation of children and adults is endemic in most communities across the country and Warwickshire is no exception to this. The exploitation often occurs in plain sight.

There is frequent reference in the national and local media to County Lines, in this model, organised criminal networks typically exploit children and adults to distribute drugs and money across the country through dedicated mobile phone lines (often from cities to counties – hence the term county lines).

### **County Lines is only one of the forms of criminal exploitation taking place in Warwickshire.**

People in Warwickshire are being forced to work in cannabis factories, forced to shoplift, forced to threaten violence against others, sexually exploited or victims of labour exploitation. Often those being exploited are controlled using threats, violence and sexual abuse, leaving them traumatised and living in fear. Some of those being exploited will be dependent upon the exploiter for critical care and support, they may not even realise they are being exploited.

Victims can be targeted in a range of ways, through face-to-face interactions, online through social media or other platforms. Criminal groups can hijack popular culture such as music videos to entice young people into criminal exploitation. Victims can also be exploited by partners, family, ‘friends’ and neighbours.

The exploiters take advantage of vulnerability when targeting victims. The victim could have grown up in poverty, have learning difficulties, been excluded from school, they could suffer from poor mental health or have substance misuse issues. It is also known that gender, age, ethnicity, homelessness and social isolation can be factors. In reality the factors that could put a person at risk of exploitation are extensive.

## Examples of exploitation occurring in Warwickshire now:

*Adult victims of labour exploitation have been rescued by police officers who carried out a routine stop-check on a mini-bus travelling through Warwickshire. The minibus was found to contain a number of adults from Eastern Europe who had been recruited to work for a parcel delivery firm in an area outside of Warwickshire.*

*Young people missing from the Birmingham area have been found in cuckooed properties actively involved in the supply of drugs. The occupier of the property was also being exploited because they had a drug dependency as well as mental health difficulties.*

*A group of around 10 young people were identified as being at risk of exploitation having become involved in the supply of drugs, members of the group were found in possession of offensive weapons and there was also a fear that that they could be further drawn into organised criminal activity and inter-gang rivalry/confrontation.*

*Vietnamese young people and adults have been found inside premises being used for the cultivation of cannabis.*

*Young people being exploited to supply drugs to their peers on their way to and from school. Some of those young people involved have also been sexually exploited. A number of incidents connected to the activity have involved serious violence and the use of knives or other weapons.*

*A County Line operating involving the exploitation of adult drug users, cuckooing addresses and involving threats to cause serious harm over drugs debts.*

*An adult who befriended two people was exploited, they coerced him into allowing them to move into his flat, having done this they began to financially and physically abuse him.*



## 2. Definition

### **There is no statutory definition of criminal exploitation per se.**

The Serious Violence Strategy (2018)<sup>1</sup>, defines child criminal exploitation as:

'...where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity

- (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
- (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or
- (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

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

For the purpose of this strategy Warwickshire Safeguarding intend to adopt an amended version of the definition for child criminal exploitation so it can apply equally to adults.

The definition will be:

Where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child, young person under the age of 18 or adult into any criminal activity

- (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
- (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or
- (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

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

### **Exploitation of Adults**

Any person can be a victim of criminal exploitation as a result of their situation or circumstances, but some will be more at risk for a range of reasons. Extrinsic factors acting with intrinsic factors can make someone suffer or be at risk of harm

Where an adult has care and support needs is at risk of abuse or neglect and is unable to protect themselves because of those needs the Local Authority would be required to complete an enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014<sup>2</sup>. The purpose of the enquiry would be to decide what action to take to support and protect the person in question.

The police would become involved in a section 42 enquiry if there was reasonable suspicion that a crime may have been committed and the harm caused to the adult concerned was deliberate, malicious or reckless. The Local Authority would refer the concern to the police in those instances and the Local Authority and the police would hold a 'strategy discussion' to agree a way forward.

It is important to highlight that an adult could still be at risk if exploitation but if the adult did not have care and support needs an enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014 would not be required. In those cases, partners would still have an obligation to take steps to prevent the exploitation from taking place.

<sup>1</sup> [HM Government, 2018. Serious Violence Strategy](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Care Act 2014](#)

## Transition

Since the implementation of the Care Act 2014, the range of statutory duties placed upon Local Authorities in protecting Adults at Risk from abuse has widened to include people leaving care; increasing the importance of effective working across the transition period from childhood into adulthood.

- Exploitation does not stop just because the child turns 18
- Young adults as well as children are also vulnerable to all forms of exploitation.

Perpetrators target vulnerability not age.

## Definition of The Exploitation of Children and Adults

Provided below are definitions of the different types of exploitation for your reference:

- **Sexual exploitation<sup>3</sup>:** This is a form of 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, or adult with care and support needs, into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) 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. Sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

- **Missing people:** The definition of missing:

*"Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered missing until located and their well-being confirmed."* (College of Policing, APP)

There a number of immediate risks associated with going missing, which could include:

- Involvement in criminal activities;
- Victim of abuse;
- Victim of crime, for example through sexual assault and exploitation;

- Alcohol/substance misuse;
- Deterioration of physical and mental health;
- Missing out on education;
- Sexual and financial exploitation as a result of trafficking.

Warwickshire Police are the lead agency responsible for the initial risk assessment and management of missing person enquiries and the ensuing investigation to locate the person. The College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice (APP) places all missing persons within a continuum of risk ranging from 'no apparent risk' (previously referred to as 'absent'), through to 'high risk' cases requiring immediate, intensive collaborative action. The risk assessment for missing persons is a guide to the appropriate level of response based on initial and ongoing risk assessment in a case. Actively reviewing risk levels on an ongoing basis remains important for all agencies involved to enable them to assess changing circumstances and respond accordingly.

While adults can be deemed to be 'no apparent risk' Warwickshire Police and partners do not deem a child to be 'No apparent risk' or 'Low risk'. Given their age and associated vulnerability they will be classified as either 'Medium' or 'High'.

- **Criminal exploitation:** Criminal Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child, young person or an adult into any criminal activity: (a) In exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) For the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator (such as to support serious organised crime and/or terrorism), and/or (c) Through violence or the threat of violence to ensure compliance. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual.

Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology and/or social media. Because they are more likely to be easily detected, individuals who are exploited are more likely to be arrested and criminalised for criminal behaviour, than those individuals or groups who are exploiting them. Individuals who are being criminally exploited can be involved, linked to or considered to be (by themselves or others) as part of a "gang". It is

<sup>3</sup>[Sexual Exploitation and Missing Procedures](#)

important when children or adults identify or are identified as being affected or involved with gang-related activity that involves the use of actual or threatened violence and/or drug dealing that professionals also consider that they may be victims of criminal exploitation. Criminal exploitation is broader than but often part of organised crime and county lines.

- **Organised Crime & County lines:** Organised Crime is “serious crime planned, coordinated and conducted by people working together on a continuing basis. Their motivation is often, but not always, financial gain.” Organised crime groups are “organised criminals working together for a particular criminal activity or activities.” County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and adults to move, [locally supply] and store the drugs and money. They will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.
- **Cuckooing:** This term is “named after the nest stealing practices of wild cuckoos. It describes the situation where a county lines dealer ‘takes over’ accommodation located in the provincial drugs market, using it as a local dealing base.” (Coomber and Moyle: 2017) An individual or group can do this by taking over the homes of local adults and families through an abuse of power or vulnerability by coercion, control and/or force so that they can provide a base for the supply of drugs into the local community. This places the adult and/or families at an increased risk of eviction (if they are in social or privately rented housing) and isolation from their communities due to the anti-social activity it can create. Cuckooing often forms part of wider ‘county lines’ activity and is also a form of criminal exploitation.
- **Modern Slavery:** Modern slavery is the illegal exploitation of people for personal or commercial gain. It covers a wide range of abuse and exploitation including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced labour, criminal exploitation and organ harvesting. Victims of modern slavery can be any age, gender, nationality and ethnicity. They are tricked or threatened into work and may feel unable to leave or report the crime through fear or intimidation. They may not recognise themselves as a victim.

- **Human Trafficking:** Article 3 of the Palermo Protocol (2000) defines trafficking as follows: “Trafficking of persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;

- **Hate Crime:** The term ‘hate crime’ can be used to describe a range of criminal behaviour where the perpetrator is motivated by hostility or demonstrates hostility towards the victim’s disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity.

These aspects of a person’s identity are known as ‘protected characteristics’. A hate crime can include verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, assault and bullying, as well as damage to property. The perpetrator can also be a friend, carer or acquaintance who exploits their relationship with the victim for financial gain or some other criminal purpose.

- **Prevent/Extremism:** ‘Extremism’ is defined in the 2011 Prevent Strategy as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

‘Violent Extremism’ is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) as:

“The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views, which:

- *“Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;*
- *Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;*
- *Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts;*

- *Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.”*

There are a number of offences that can be considered when dealing with violent extremism. They include offences arising through spoken words, creation of tapes and videos of speeches, internet entries, chanting, banners and written notes and publications. The main offences employed to date have been soliciting murder and inciting racial hatred.

‘Radicalisation’ refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Radicalisation is usually a process not an event.





# 3. Ambition and Strategic Objectives

The ambition of Warwickshire Safeguarding is to work collaboratively with the local communities and a range of partners across different sectors to tackle the exploitation of adults and children resident in Warwickshire and those travelling into the county and being exploited.

We acknowledge that this will be challenging as there are no easy solutions, but we can and must do more to protect those who are being exploited now or are at risk of being exploited in the future.

When a person is being forced or coerced to commit crime, we will ensure that we respond intelligently as far too often those being exploited are often criminalised rather than being seen as victims of exploitation. We will ensure that there is an appropriate response to those being exploited.

## Strategic Objectives

1. We will always act in the best interests of the child, this will be done by promoting the welfare of the child, listening to the voice of the child and by ensuring that their wishes and concerns are heard.
2. In developing our response to adult exploitation, we are committed to **Making Safeguarding Personal** and the six key principles of safeguarding that underpin this:
  - **Empowerment:** Promoting person-led decisions and informed consent.
  - **Protection:** Support and protection for those in greatest need.
  - **Prevention:** It is better to take action before harm occurs.
  - **Proportionality:** Proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

- **Partnership:** Providing local solutions through services working with communities
- **Accountability:** accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding

## The 4 P Approach

**Prepare:** To reduce the impact of exploitation. *Children, young people and adults have a right to be educated about associated dangers to prevent and enable them to protect themselves. This strategy aims to prevent children, young people and adults with care and support needs from experiencing, or continuing to experience, exploitation by providing effective awareness-raising and quality learning and development opportunities.*

**Prevent:** To prevent people from becoming victims and perpetrators of exploitation. *All partners have a responsibility to safeguard children, young people and adults from harm. This strategy aims to develop an intelligence picture which will inform local partnership understanding of context, and locations of concern.*

**Protect:** To strengthen safeguards against exploitation. *Single and multi-agency processes and procedures must be effective, efficient and for purpose. This strategy aims to effective victim centred practice and service provision, to protect those who may be experiencing or are at risk of exploitation.*

**Pursue:** To prosecute and disrupt perpetrators of exploitation. *Exploitation within Warwickshire needs to be identified and disrupted. This strategy aims to identify methods in which information can be used to assess, intervene and prosecute those who seek to facilitate and /or perpetrate exploitation.*

## 4. Warwickshire Practice Approach

Practice in Warwickshire is committed to a victim centred approach which values the importance of building trusted relationships with those who are experiencing or at risk of exploitation.

### Trauma Informed Practice

The approach to dealing with survivors of exploitation in Warwickshire will be trauma informed.

Extensive research has been completed on the effects of trauma on the brain, memories of traumatic events are different to memories of non-traumatic events. When a person is subjected to the threat of being killed or abused, or witnesses this threat in relation to other people, their body reacts in specific ways to enhance their chances of physical survival. This biological and evolved reaction also affects the parts of the brain that are responsible for the laying down of memory.

Many survivors of trauma experience feelings of shame and humiliation, which can prevent them from feeling able to express themselves and to assert their needs with others. Survivors will often not display any signs of fear or confusion and will appear to be fine and able to manage; they will often minimise, conceal or deny being injured.

Professionals working with survivors of exploitation will need to have a level of awareness and training to enable them to understand the exploited person's individual needs and be able to develop a working relationship based on trust. At every stage it will be essential to demonstrate an interest in survivors' well-being beginning from getting the first contact right, delivering a calm, kind, consistent approach at all times and in all environments.

### Contextual Safeguarding

In developing our response to exploitation, we will endeavour to understand the lived experiences of those being exploited, without understanding the contexts of their situations, it is almost impossible to respond in an effective way.

Exploitation can occur from within a family environment, but we also know children and adults are at risk of exploitation from outside their families. These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online.

Children and adults can be at risk from multiple threats including exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines; trafficking; online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. We also know that individuals can be both victims of and perpetrators of exploitation. When developing our response to exploitation we will consider the wider environmental factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare, and we will consider the individual needs and vulnerabilities of those involved.

### Restorative Practice

We have adopted restorative practice in Warwickshire because it fits with our ethics and values. Restorative practice neatly describes our own reasons and intentions to work with children and their families. We also believe that restorative practice will assist us in achieving all our key strategic goals. We believe that if we work with families to resolve problems then we will not need to use more intrusive interventions, we will not need to bring so many children into care and we will support our own foster carers to care for our children.

We believe that all children have a right to feel safe all the time and we all have a duty to help to keep our children and their families safe. We want to make sure that every child growing up in Warwickshire has the best possible start in life and that we have helped them as much as we can on their way.

Restorative practice is a way of working that we have adopted in our work with children and their families. Restorative practice is a term used to describe a method of working with people which emphasises three key things:

- The importance of respectful, healthy relationships;
- A belief in resolving difficulties;
- A commitment to repairing harm where there has been conflict.

Central to restorative practice is a commitment to work with people. We believe that better outcomes will happen if we work alongside people, rather than doing things to them, doing things for them or just not doing them at all. We recognise that families are the experts in their own lives, and we need to work with families to help turn this expertise into the solutions needed at the time to solve problems.



## 5. Missing People

There are considerable interconnections between exploitation and people that go missing, especially in respect of children and young people, meaning these issues cannot be dealt with in isolation.

This strategy and the associated action plan therefore includes an outline of our commitment to deliver an effective response to missing people between services working with children and adults; supporting agencies in coordinating activity to reduce the number of people going missing and to limit the harm related to those who do. We seek to ensure information is shared so that services are cohesive and adequately able to safeguard children and adults who go missing or who may be at risk of doing so.

Our aim is to build upon existing good work in Warwickshire. We want to:

- Prevent people from going missing in the first place where possible,
- Reduce the risk of harm associated with people going missing, including disrupting networks influencing missing events and perpetrating the harm, and
- Recover missing people as quickly as possible and provide them and their families with support and guidance to reduce further occurrences.

The objectives outlined earlier in this strategy are mutually supportive, as are the 4P's methodology applied. They are primarily targeted at the groups most likely to go missing - children and young people and adults at risk, particularly older people with dementia.

We are committed to adopting best practice approaches and have implemented national initiatives that support our aims in this regard, such as the Philomena Protocol<sup>4</sup> for responding to children in care going missing and Operation Innerste<sup>5</sup> for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. These protocols enhance our

collective effectiveness when responding to such cases, aimed at maximising efforts to prevent missing events and when they do occur to secure the safe and quick return of the missing person.

### Context

While it is recognised that not every person who goes missing is vulnerable, research and practice experience recognises that some people are more vulnerable than others because of their circumstances, and that there can be an association between people going missing and harm. Consequently, where a child goes missing, the response must be considered as a safeguarding issue. The police are entitled to expect parents and carers, including staff acting in a parenting role in care homes, to accept normal parenting responsibilities and undertake reasonable actions to try and establish the whereabouts of the individual. Children who are breaching parental discipline should not be dealt with by police unless there are other risks. For example, a child who is late home from a party should not be regarded as missing until the parent or carer has undertaken enquiries to locate the child. Once those enquiries have been completed, it may be appropriate to record the child as missing and take appropriate actions.

When there is a missing adult those responding must think about exploitation and be curious and check if exploitation is a factor or not. Where it is and the person appears to have needs for care and support it should be considered as a safeguarding issue.

Warwickshire Safeguarding have been looking at the issue of missing children since 2013, with the introduction of a Joint Protocol to guide an effective response, and our intention was clearly defined in the Exploitation, Missing & Trafficked Children Strategy 2017-2020. Similar work over-time has been conducted in

<sup>4</sup>[Philomena Protocol](#)

<sup>5</sup>[Operation Innerste](#)

respect of adults at risk through the introduction of practices for responding to persons with mental health and dementia concerns at risk of going missing. Warwickshire Safeguarding will look at good practice with children and young people and where it is of value adapt and adopt it when working with adults.

This updated strategy draws the response to adults and children together and builds upon evolving research and practice-informed understanding of the inter-related nature of contextual threats. This Strategy challenges partners to identify children and adults who are at risk of going, or who have gone missing, and consider how they will be identified. They are challenged too, to identify when a missing episode is associated with a risk of harm and develop a proportionate pathway of continuing, bespoke safeguarding and support; equally, to proactively pursue and prosecute perpetrators associated with the missing person.



## 6. Dataset and Measuring Success

It is acknowledged that more needs to be done by the partnership to collate qualitative and quantitative data to enable us to properly understand the scale, prevalence and effectiveness of interventions.

There are no consistent 'markers' to 'flag' those who are at risk of criminal exploitation across the different agencies they come into contact with. Although some sharing of data exists all too often agencies collate data in silos without giving consideration to the value the data may have to the wider partnership. This needs to change.

To allow for partnership to develop an effective response to exploitation we are committed to the development of shared datasets that builds on the data that is already collated and plugs any perceived gaps in our knowledge and understanding of the problem.

Performance management and the measurement of success is crucial to ensuring continuous improvement. The partners of the Exploitation Subgroup, individually and collectively, have responsibility to ensure objectives and targets developed are being met and maintained. Objectives and targets for improvement will be framed within an outcome based accountability approach, reporting performance, and using information to identify problems and taking decisions to solve them.



# 7. Strategic Thematic Review

Warwickshire Safeguarding Executive Board (WSEB) completed a strategic thematic review on exploitation entitled '[The Exploitation of Children and Adults](#)'. The review was undertaken between November 2019 and February 2020, it adopted a triangulation approach (*Figure 1*), which is a method used to prepare and gather evidence during quality assurance processes.

The review, that involved a range of partners, focused on:

1. Self-evaluations
2. Case audits and findings from Inspections
3. Feedback from service users and professionals

Based on the review a number of improvements were identified and the key areas detailed below:

- Governance, Policies and Procedures
- Identification and Early Intervention
- The Lived Experience
- Partnership and Information Sharing

The findings of the thematic strategic review are accepted in full and have been used to develop the Warwickshire Safeguarding Exploitation Action Plan.



*Figure 1: Scrutiny and Assurance Framework*

## 8. Warwickshire Exploitation Snapshot Questionnaire

The members of the Exploitation Subgroup were asked to provide information about their current position in respect of exploitation so to obtain understanding of the current climate in the county. Members were asked to advise of the:

1. activity that their agency is engaging in to support people who may be experiencing or who are at risk of exploitation.
2. activity that their agency is engaging in to raise awareness about the risks of exploitation and the support that is available.
3. the impact the Covid 19 crisis has had on their agencies ability to deliver services stated in point 1 and 2.
4. advise whether their organisation has 'first responder' obligations under the MSHT guidance, advising how they are assured that staff have sufficient skills and training to carry out this role where required.

The findings of this snapshot review have been used to develop the Warwickshire Safeguarding Exploitation Action Plan.





# 9. Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Programme

Warwickshire Safeguarding approached the [Tackling Child Exploitation](#) (TCE) Programme for support in developing its response to the exploitation of adults and children. The TCE Programme, funded by the Department for Education, aims to support local areas in tackling child exploitation. The aim of the programme is to support partnerships to develop an effective strategic response to child exploitation and threats from outside the family home.

The TCE Programme encouraged Warwickshire to adopt an approach centred on collaboration and co-production, working alongside local colleagues and recognising them as the experts in their local systems and the challenges they face as part of their change approach. Following initial scoping conversations between the TCE project lead and the local single point of contact (SPOC), an introductory session took place involving TCE deliver partners and members of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Executive Board where the aims of the project were agreed.

These aims helped shape the focus of two delivery workshop sessions involving a wide range of local senior colleagues from across Warwickshire.

The first session involved around 30 people from a range of partner agencies including police, youth justice, schools, adult social care, community safety and health. It focused on transitions, both in terms of raising professional awareness of the challenges and opportunities presented in adopting an all age approach to exploitation, and in exploring how these translate into the local system, with a view to identifying where further strategic development may be required.

A key issue identified was the importance of identifying key relationships that were protective factors for young people and considering how they could be continued or handed over well beyond the engagement of a service, or beyond the 18th birthday.

A strong message coming through from colleagues was that in order to undertake such significant and ambitious changes within the local system, supportive and joined-up leadership was needed.

The second delivery workshop focused on identifying the practical, physical and emotional capabilities that were already in place to make change, and the practical, physical and emotional resources that were needed in addition.

From the discussions over the two days, there were three main areas that participants highlighted should be the focus of future change. It was felt Warwickshire would be able to make more progress on tackling exploitation and achieve better outcomes for children and adults if these areas were addressed:

## Raising awareness of exploitation

- 1) Raising awareness of exploitation among a wider group of professionals and other key people who were in touch with adults and children who might be subject to exploitation. This group (including GPs, housing staff, teachers, home care workers) were the eyes and ears of the system and were likely to be the first to spot that 'something's not right'.
- 2) Reaching these people effectively meant:
  - Developing a shared definition of exploitation that fitted Warwickshire's circumstances and a shared description of 'what to look for' (covering adults as well as children)
  - Identifying a clear shared offer of what to do if you were worried that someone was being exploited

## Collaboration at a strategic/service level

3) Collaboration at a strategic / service level. This involved:

- Aligning training/awareness events across the county (both geographically and thematically)
- Aligning Commissioning plans in order to prevent duplication and to ensure effective use of resources across the partnership
- Including a wider range of partners in the strategic conversations – including experts such as those commissioned to deliver specialist services across the children's and adults' landscape

4) Developing a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities across the Partnership

5) Considering governance implications – what is the role of the Safeguarding Partnership, it's sub groups, and other, more operational leads

6) Finding spaces for informal conversations and networks so that people know who is who, are able to build strong and trusting working relationships, and have the opportunity to build professional peer support networks

## Support / Resources

7) Support / Resources to enable both collaboration and awareness raising to happen. This included:

- Integrated systems that 'talk' to each other
- A variety of specific suggestions such as hubs, maps and networks
- Support for staff wellbeing - both in individual 1-1s and supervision (making sure that supervision covered wellbeing as well as case management), as well as group support such as 'soft spaces' where people could share their experiences, concerns and offload together.

Warwickshire Safeguarding would like to formally acknowledge and thank the professionals from the TCE Programme for their support. The findings of the programme have been taken into consideration when develop our response to develop the Warwickshire Safeguarding Exploitation Action Plan.

# 10. Role of Exploitation Subgroup

Warwickshire Safeguarding Partnership created an Exploitation Subgroup, the role of the subgroup is to provide strategic oversight in relation to the protection of children and adults from harm as a result of criminal and sexual exploitation and abuse, people trafficking, modern slavery and missing people.

- **The Exploitation Strategy is a 3-year plan, which will be reviewed annually by the Exploitation Subgroup;**
- **The Exploitation Subgroup will be responsible for the development and implementation of an Action Plan to enable the Exploitation Strategy to be delivered. The Action Plan is a live document, enabling actions to be added as identified;**
- **To be effective the subgroup will be expected to link in with other strategic partnerships and organisations that have role to play addressing the issue of exploitation including the Safer Warwickshire Partnership and the Serious and Organised Crime Joint Action Group (SOCJAG).**

The subgroup will be held to account by the Warwickshire Safeguarding Executive Group, the subgroup will also be expected to provide regular updates to the Warwickshire Safeguarding Partnership where against the action plan can be scrutinised



