



**Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC)  
In partnership with Children 1st**

**Stop to Listen (STL) Pathfinder**

## **FINAL EVALUATION REPORT**

**31 March 2018**



*Protecting Children and Young People: It is Still Everyone's Job*

***Describe how partners have worked together in terms of Stop to Listen (STL) and what prompted this innovation or change?***

### ***Background / Introduction / National Context***

Stop to Listen (STL) is the national, multi-agency approach, led by Children 1st, which aims to develop and improve prevention, early intervention and child-centred responses to children and young people who may be at risk of, or have experienced sexual abuse (CSA) and exploitation (CSE).

The aim of this work is to improve the way in which we work alongside children and young people by building strong and trusting relationships, through which children and young people, who have experienced sexual abuse and / or exploitation, are able to have more control over, and involvement in, the process of disclosure, investigation and recovery. It also aims to ensure that the multi-agency response process goes at their pace as far as possible; responds to their own fears about disclosure and gains trust; whilst offering them support throughout and after the process of disclosure.

### ***Perth and Kinross Context***

Following strategic approval and publication of the Perth and Kinross Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Work Plan on 1 April 2015, Elected Members, Chief Officers and Community Planning Partnership (CPP) partners committed themselves to a *zero-tolerance approach to abuse and exploitation* and to *ensuring a hostile environment* to such behaviours across Perth and Kinross and have since recorded that *there is no place for abuse and exploitation in our communities*.

Our CSE Work Plan, which reflects the National Action Plan to Tackle CSE, contains four workstreams: *Prevention; Intervention; Disruption and Prosecution and Recovery*; all of which support STL.

Simultaneously, as part of our partnership approach to CSA / CSE and our commitment to improving our single and multi-agency early intervention and child-centred responses, Perth and Kinross was successful in its application to become a national STL National Pathfinder area together with Glasgow, North Ayrshire and Renfrewshire.

### ***Perth and Kinross STL Steering Group***

Working in partnership with Ruth Sills, Stop to Listen Development Manager at Children 1st, we established the Perth and Kinross Multi-Agency STL Steering Group (chaired by Jacquie Pepper, Chair of Perth and Kinross CPC) with clear Terms of Reference and we developed our STL Pathfinder Project Plan.

This Working Group has worked alongside the Perth and Kinross CSE Working Group and provided regular written update reports and briefings to the CPC, the Children, Young People and Families Partnership (CYPFP – Chief Officer Group) and to Perth and Kinross Council (Elected Members).

These reporting arrangements provided our STL work with strong strategic leadership, direction, support, challenge and scrutiny. All meetings of the STL Steering Group have been minuted and the Project Plan has been subject to robust scrutiny by way of regular update and progress reports.

### ***Perth and Kinross Practice / Culture Areas Identified for STL Change and Improvement***

Following a number of key briefings; joint workshops; steering group meetings; a young people's speak-up innovation lab; a leadership summit and a CSE masterclass, we identified and agreed collectively the following practice areas which would benefit from change and improvement via the pathfinder:

- 1. Joint Investigative Interviewing and Training; and***
- 2. Peer Mentoring / Young People's Advisory Group.***

***What do you feel Stop to Listen (STL) has achieved and what challenges has this presented at a local and / or a national level?***

## **Joint Investigative Interviewing and Training – Achievements**

This was an area of practice we identified quickly for the STL change and improvement pathfinder work.

Within Perth and Kinross, all Child Concern Reports are considered via the multi-agency screening group (MASG) and children and young people at risk of CSA / CSE are considered through an Inter-Agency Referral Discussion (IRD) and very often go on to be jointly interviewed by police and social work staff who have undertaken joint investigative interview training to national standards. Historically joint investigative interview training has been delivered at the Scottish Police College or locally at a Tayside-wide level.

Within Perth and Kinross we have an Interview Suite at Almondbank House, Perth where the majority of our joint investigative interviews (visually recorded interviews) take place. Mobile recording equipment also allows for joint investigative interviews to take place remotely.

Through the STL Pathfinder discussions we recognised that aspects of our joint investigative interviewing could be improved significantly. As a result the following work has been completed or is under completion.

- *identification of local case studies to demonstrate prevention, intervention, disruption and prosecution.* We have collated a number of short, anonymised case studies for publication and to use as part of workforce learning and development. This will ensure the context of our CSA / CSE training is kept both real and relevant to local practitioners;
- *identification of individual cases appropriate for the STL approach.* We supported the identification of individual cases of children and young people at risk of CSA / CSE by improving our multi-agency screening group (MASG) arrangements. By involving staff from our integrated Services for Young People in our multi-agency screening arrangements, we enhanced and expanded the range of responses to young people at risk. We also improved our IRD processes by implementing an aide-memoire, which now includes a specific requirement to consider CSA / CSE;
- *enhanced preparation, planning and child-centred rapport building opportunities prior to joint investigative interview.* We have improved this by reviewing and refreshing the local joint investigative interview training programme to ensure a sufficient emphasis and attention is paid to these key stages pre-joint investigative interview.;
- *enhancement of our interview facility and environment.* Following our multi-agency representation at the Children 1st Getting it Right for Child Witnesses Conference at the Scottish Police College on 12 October 2016, we made significant improvements to the child interview room at Almondbank House, Perth. Working with local young people, this included improved lighting, decoration, seating and soft furnishings; making it a more safe, child-centred and comfortable environment for the joint investigative interviewing of child victims. Further improvements are being made to the recording equipment and to the wider interview suite facility environment (being funded via Police Scotland);
- *trauma-informed practice training for our joint investigative interviewers (police and social work).* Working with Children 1st, we arranged for 4 police officers and 6 social workers to jointly undertake trauma informed practice training in August 2017. This joint training, commissioned by Children 1st, was delivered by Susanne Goetzold, Napier University. It was evaluated very highly (on-the-day exit evaluations) and showed significantly increased practice knowledge and confidence post this training course; and,
- *impact of trauma-informed practice training.* This joint training was further evaluated by way of a Focus Group and Follow-Up Questionnaire in January 2018. All ten participants took part in this follow-up evaluation which confirmed that attendees very much valued the opportunity to learn more about trauma-informed practice and welcomed the safe space to consider and reflect upon current and future practice arrangements.

## **Joint Investigative Interviewing and Training – Challenges**

Overall, there have been few challenges with this aspect of our STL change and improvement pathfinder work.

We were quickly able to include changes to strengthen our MASG arrangements and IRD processes. We were able to identify suitable case studies and develop these accordingly with care. We were able to make significant improvements to our interview suite facility and improve our local joint investigative interview training, all within our existing funding. We are waiting additional funding via Police Scotland to make further improvements.

We have also had to take into consideration, and be mindful of, the potential impact of the ongoing Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS) Evidence and Procedure Review and the emerging National Joint Investigative Interview Practice and Training requirements.

Further local work remains to be undertaken to develop a Quality Assurance and Evaluation Framework for all Joint Investigative Interviews. Extracting police and social work staff for enhanced trauma-informed practice training and participation in the follow-up focus group and evaluation processes presented some limited logistical challenges in terms of staffing cover.

### **Peer Mentoring / Young People's Advisory Group – Achievements**

This was an area of practice we also identified for the STL change and improvement pathfinder work.

Working in partnership with our Services for Young People colleagues and with other external partners via @scott street (the Perth City base for young people), we initially explored the possibility of establishing a group of young people to act as peer mentors for CSA / CSE. We considered the various opportunities and challenges; types of other local models already in existence; the required support, supervision and training requirements and concluded that the best approach was to establish a Young People's CSE Advisory Group.

By applying the STL change and improvement pathfinder approach, we recognised the rich potential to have young people's voices at the heart of all our CSA / CSE work. Following a number of initial / exploratory meetings and discussions we developed this work further and this has included:

- *establishment of the Young People's CSE Advisory Group.* This Group has now met on at least 12 occasions since June 2017. The Group continues to grow in size and is representative of young people from across Perth and Kinross including groups of young people who feel marginalised and others who may have experienced CSA / CSE;
- *providing them with a Group Name.* We supported and facilitated this Group to develop its own unique identity and branding and as a result they rejected the proposed name by re-naming themselves as the Young People's CSE Advisory Group. The Group has gained local notoriety and is now formally included as one of the bespoke young people's groups in the new Perth and Kinross Youth Voice arrangements which can directly influence policy and decision makers at the highest level. For example, locally the Group has been invited to be part of the CPC Annual Development Day in May 2018 and an opportunity has arisen for them to also be part of the wider Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative work. Outwith Perth and Kinross a number of other CPCs have expressed an interest in learning more about the work and activities of this Group;
- *providing them with a Group Remit.* As the Group has evolved they have significantly amended their Group Remit and defined it more accurately to reflect their current and planned activities;
- *supporting the Group to develop a Young People's CSE Survey.* Having developed this survey themselves, the Group implemented and completed it in Perth and Kinross Council Secondary Schools in December 2017. A total of 574 young people responded to this survey and provided information on their knowledge levels of CSE; how and where they currently obtain information about CSE; where they would like to obtain information about CSE; what they would do if they were

affected by or worried about CSE and were asked if they thought CSE was a problem in their community (Responses: Yes – 18.1%; No – 28.4% and Don't Know – 53.5%);

- *examining the CSE survey results.* The Group is providing individual school reports and planning a further and much larger CSE survey in Autumn 2018;
- *examining the Perth and Kinross CSE Webpages.* The Group is in the process of re-drafting information and advice leaflets and other materials for young people;
- *planning a further CSE publicity and information.* The Group is currently developing key messages and a short video film for posting on social media platforms via the CPC;
- *participating in a Focus Group.* Representatives from the Group took part in a STL Focus Group on 21 March 2018. Facilitated by Ruth Sills, 6 members of the Group took part in these discussions which focussed on the establishment of the Group (opportunities and challenges); experience of the Group; key achievements of the Group; awareness of CSA / CSE and what next for the Group.

### ***Peer Mentoring / Young People's Advisory Group – Challenges***

This particular aspect of our STL change and improvement pathfinder work initially presented us with a number of challenges.

Initial attempts to establish a group of young people as CSA / CSE peer mentors were met with opposition from some of our partners who cited concerns about risks to their emotional health and wellbeing; levels of supervision and support; extent and length of training requirements and possible organisational risks. There were also concerns raised about the potential for peer mentors being cited as significant witnesses in any future CSA / CSE criminal investigations and / or proceedings. This resulted in a change of direction for our pathfinder work.

Once the Young People's CSE Advisory Group was established, some funding challenges were quickly realised and the CPC provided a small amount of funding to help with transportation / travel / refreshment costs for those attending the Group from across Perth and Kinross. Like any new Group, the Young People's CSE Advisory Group is following Tuckman's model of group development (forming, storming, norming and performing) and certain dynamics have been addressed accordingly. There is also a recognition that the Group would benefit from more male members and they are actively working to achieve a gender balance.

The development of the Survey Questionnaire also presented some unexpected challenges as key questions were initially ruled-in and then ruled-out. The roll-out of the survey link to all Secondary Schools was relatively easy, however universal take-up was not consistent across all Secondary Schools as the survey was competing with other school curriculum demands and / or pressures.

### ***Perth and Kinross STL Pathfinder – Additional Activities***

In addition to the above, Perth and Kinross took part in the following STL Pathfinder Activities:

#### ***National STL Data Collection Exercise and Trauma Scoping Mapping Exercise***

Led by Children 1st and the NSPCC, this dual national mapping exercise took place in October 2016 and examined the rate of CSA / CSE and the provision of therapeutic support levels for CSA / CSE across Perth and Kinross, by seeking key information from third sector, health, police and social work databases.

There were a number of limitations and constraints with this national mapping exercise which recognised the unreliability of service / agency databases; different recording practices, variable definitions and thresholds; elements of under-reporting and the absence of any reliable Scottish CSA / CSE prevalence studies.



However, by benchmarking and some extrapolation, it provided indicative information in respect of CSA / CSE prevalence and the availability / gap in our therapeutic support services in Perth and Kinross, particularly for those aged under 12 years of age and for young people with a disability.

This has since resulted in the publication of the Perth and Kinross CSA and CSE Directory of Support Services (for Practitioners) with a further Directory (for Children, Young People and Families) currently under development by RASAC Perth and Kinross. RASAC are also carrying out a further more in-depth mapping exercise as we attempt to deliver a more coordinated therapeutic and recovery approach to CSA / CSE in Perth and Kinross.

### ***Trauma-Informed Practice Training***

Following on from the trauma-informed practice training (for joint investigative interviewers) described earlier, working in partnership with RASAC Perth and Kinross, the CPC piloted an initial Trauma-Informed Practice multi-agency training course in June 2017, which was again evaluated very highly.

Recognising the clear culture and practice benefits in this approach, the Adult Protection Committee (APC) and the CPC has subsequently commissioned RASAC Perth and Kinross to deliver a Trauma-Informed Training Package comprising a Multi-Agency Resource Booklet; Training Sessions and Workshops for staff and Briefings Sessions for Managers.

In the interim, on 15 March 2018, a Practitioner Conference entitled *Addressing the Effects of Trauma Throughout Life* took place at Perth Concert Hall supported by the CPC, Adult Protection Committee and Violence Against Women Partnership. This event has also been evaluated very highly.

### ***How has Stop to Listen (STL) improved the wellbeing of children and young people and what further work needs to be undertaken to ensure a child-centred response to child sexual abuse and exploitation?***

STL by its mere definition has ensured we take time, stop to listen and ensure a child-centred approach and response to CSA / CSE. As a pathfinder area, we have re-examined our prevention, early intervention and investigation pathways. We have improved our multi-agency screening group arrangements and IRD processes to ensure the impact of CSA / CSE is carefully considered. We have further developed some of our joint investigative interviewers to ensure their interviewing practice and approach is trauma informed and child-centred.

We have significantly improved our interview suite facility and we have created a more welcoming and comforting environment for disclosure, interview and investigation and we did so in consultation with young people. Working in partnership, we have improved our response and support to children and young people at risk of, and / or who have been the victims of CSA / CSE and we have published a directory of support services to support their longer term wellbeing needs. We have also identified case studies which evidence our very good multi-agency partnership working and better outcomes for children and young people at risk of, and / or who have been the victims of CSA / CSE.

We have also supported the establishment of a Young People's CSE Advisory Group, which may be the first of its kind in Scotland. Young people themselves have developed the group's name and remit; worked to increase its membership, reach and influence and as a result of their survey, heard first hand from their peers across Perth and Kinross about their experiences and awareness of CSA / CSE.

This survey confirmed that children and young people had a very good awareness and understanding of CSA / CSE; new where to find information and where they would like to find information and knew who they would contact if they were worried about CSA / CSE. The group is currently developing creative and innovative ways of promoting awareness and understanding of CSA / CSE for young people and is now actively influencing our practice and policy approach.

Feedback from both our joint investigative interviewing practitioners and from the Young People's CSE Advisory Group has been very honest and positive and they report an increased awareness and

understanding of the STL change and improvement pathfinder approach in terms of joint investigative interviewing, trauma-informed practice and the need to consider the wellbeing needs of children and young people.

However, we are not complacent and recognise that there is still much more work to be undertaken.

We plan to develop the STL practice and culture approach further; we have embedded trauma-informed practice into the local joint investigative interview training programme and working in partnership with RASAC Perth and Kinross, we plan to embed trauma-informed practice into our workforce development programmes. Further improvements are also planned for the wider interview suite facility.

Finally our commitment to the Young People's CSE Advisory Group will continue indefinitely and we are confident it will continue to grow and develop into an effective and influential CSA / CSE advisory group with a greater reach and footprint.

### ***Perth and Kinross STL Pathfinder Sources of Evidence***

- CSE Work Plan and Update Reports for COG and CPC;
- CSE Information and Advice Leaflets (Various);
- STL Steering Group – Membership / Contact List;
- STL Steering Group – Terms of Reference;
- STL Steering Group – Minutes of Meetings;
- STL Pathfinder Project Plan and Update Reports for STL SG and CPC;
- CSA / CSE Case Studies;
- MASG Procedures and IRD Aide Memoire;
- Interview Suite – Before and After Photographs;
- Trauma Informed Practice Training for JII Officers – Exit / On-The-Day Evaluation Report;
- Trauma Informed Practice Training for JII Officers – Focus Group Evaluation Report;
- Trauma Informed Practice Training for JII Officers – Survey Questionnaire Evaluation Report;
- Trauma Informed Practice Multi-Agency Training Pilot Course – Evaluation Report
- Trauma Informed Practice – RASAC Perth and Kinross – Approved Proposal for CPC;
- Joint APC and CPC Practitioner Conference – Evaluation Report;
- Young People's CSE Advisory Group – Minutes, Notes of Meetings and Remit;
- Young People's CSE Secondary Schools Survey – Evaluation Report (s);
- Young People's CSE Advisory Group – Focus Group Evaluation Report;
- National STL Data Collection Exercise and Trauma Scoping Exercise – Perth and Kinross PowerPoint Presentation and Evaluation Report;
- Perth and Kinross CSA and CSE Directory of Support Services (Practitioners); and
- Selection of various STL Presentations and Inputs.

**Ross Drummond**  
**Child Protection Inter-Agency Coordinator**  
**Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee**  
**31 March 2018**