

**SCRUTINY**

**CULTURE AND COMMUNITY SCRUTINY PANEL**

**19 FEBRUARY 2018**

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES UPDATE**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. To provide the Culture and Community Scrutiny Panel with an update on the progress made by Children's Services in relation to the recommendations made by the scrutiny panel regarding 'Digital Safeguarding - Sexting and Youth Produced Sexual Imagery.

**BACKGROUND**

1. In November 2016, the Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel was asked by the then Deputy Director of Safeguarding to undertake a scrutiny in respect of the Council's response Safeguarding young people around 'Sexting and Youth Produced Sexual Imagery'.
2. The terms of reference for the scrutiny panel's investigation were as follows:
  - a) To investigate the prevalence of "youth produced sexual imagery" in Middlesbrough.
  - b) To examine what methods or tools are currently used within the school environment to prevent or deter young people from becoming victims of youth produced sexual imagery.
  - c) To give consideration to what role does, and should the local authority and schools play in educating parents and the wider community to prevent young people engaging in new risk taking behaviours
3. The panel were supported in their work by colleagues from Middlesbrough Council, Cleveland Police, leaders of schools and Middlesbrough College, Chair of Middlesbrough Safeguarding Children's Board. A total of 12 schools in Middlesbrough were visited by Members of the panel during January and February 2017 where pupils and staff discussed their understanding of the issues around Sexting and Youth Produced Sexual Imagery. In addition written responses to A questionnaire were received from a further 7 schools.

4. The Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel produced a final report and made a number recommendations (list of recommendations attached appendix A).
5. Children's Services responded to this report and developed a departmental Action Plan around the recommendations. The report and the Action Plan were presented to Executive Members and agreed at a meeting held on 5 September 2017.
6. The governance and a management oversight of progress made against the action plan is currently being undertaken through the Departmental Management Team (DMT), and through the Middlesbrough Safeguarding Children's Board (MSCB).
7. A brief progress and RAG rating is shown against each action on appendix B (right hand column), and will be subject of more a more detailed verbal update by Jeff Watson, Risk and Resilience Manager, at the meeting of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel on 19 February 2018.

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