CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel was held on 26 March 2018.

PRESENT: Councillors L Lewis (Chair), R Arundale, D J Branson, D Davison, J Goodchild, A Hellaoui, Z Uddin and V Walkington

OFFICERS: C Breheny, R Jordinson and J Watson

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None Declared

1   **MINUTES - CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL - 19 FEBRUARY 2018**

The minutes of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel held on 19 February 2018 were submitted and approved as a true record.

2   **DIGITAL SAFEGUARDING - SEXTING AND YOUTH PRODUCED SEXUAL IMAGERY-UPDATE**

The Council's Young People's Risk and Reduction Manager and RSE C-Card Coordinator were in attendance at the meeting to provide the panel with an update on the Digital Safeguarding report, which was approved by the Executive on 5 September 2017.

The panel was informed that a significant amount of work had been undertaken as a direct result of the review. Much of the work would not have occurred without the panel's involvement especially in relation to the increased engagement with schools. Previously it had been difficult to engage the schools on this issue but the majority of schools and academies across Middlesbrough were now fully engaged. It was highlighted that appendix B contained the service department's response plan and all but three of the actions contained in the plan were now green and had been achieved.

The main aim of the work undertaken had been to ensure that young people and the professionals working with young people in Middlesbrough were fully trained up and ahead of the game in respect of youth produced sexual imagery. It was acknowledged that work with parents was at times difficult, however, the RSE C-Card Coordinator had put on a digital parenting course for the parents and grandparents of those young people that had experienced any issues. The digital parenting magazine had also been widely shared in schools and recommended to all Council employees.

In respect of the recommendation that schools produce a bespoke version of the Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (August 2016) document based on the best practice example provided by a Middlesbrough Primary School. It was explained that the bespoke versions produced by both Abingdon Primary School and Newport Primary School were viewed as best practice documents. With the permission of the respective Headteachers copies of both had been distributed to all schools across the town. It was acknowledged that the Risk and Resilience Team was not aware of how many schools had produced their own version. However, all schools had received a copy of both best practice models.

In terms of encouraging all schools to regularly attend the Digital Safeguarding Network Forum it was noted that there were now between 30 and 40 schools involved. The Network enabled which emails to be regularly shared, termly Network meetings to be held and issue of concern in respect of digital issues to be passed on. As recommended by the panel an alert system had been introduced via the Network Forum to immediately inform safeguarding staff in schools/colleges of trends / apps / online crazes that could pose a danger to young people, which staff needed to be made aware of.

It had also been recommended by the panel that a bi-annual event be hosted on 'Digital Safeguarding/Digital Resilience' in an effort to increase awareness, share best practice and

provide an opportunity for statutory agencies in Middlesbrough to share knowledge and experience in addressing these challenges.

The RSE C-Card Coordinator provided the panel with an overview of the Digital Resilience and Safeguarding Conference, which was held on 29 January 2018 at the Riverside Stadium in response to the panel's recommendation. The panel was informed that the event included speakers and workshops from a range of leading UK digital organisations including SIMFIN, CEOP, Diana Award, Cleveland Police's POLIT Unit, Parentzone (a national organisation that educates parents on the topic of digital resilience) Teesside University and The Mix (a digital charity providing information and emotional support to young people under the age of 25 through virtual channels).

Two Middlesbrough Primary Schools, which hold official accreditation programmes i.e. North Ormesby Primary School hold Apple RTC (Regional Training Centre status for training teachers on using apple products for learning) and Ayresome School, which holds accredited Lego for learning status, also both delivered interactive workshops at the conference.

The panel was reminded the term 'digital resilience' was defined as allowing children the freedom to explore the online world, but also develop strategies for them to deal with risks and identify harms in order that they could thrive in the online environment. It was about them making the most of the opportunities the digital world could offer but learning and recovering quickly from setbacks when they occurred.

It was advised that 'digital resilience' consisted of 4 main elements:-

- **Understand**- Understand when you were at risk online
- **Know** - What to do and importantly where to go when you had done or seen something inappropriate.
- **Learn**- Learn from the behaviour and adapt from the experience
- **Recover** - Bounce back quickly and not dwell on things when they went wrong.

A range of topics were discussed at the conference, including: body image, the current online safety curriculum, case studies of Online CSEA, a Middlesbrough wide charter mark proposal, best practice models and the model of digital resilience being rolled out from the government supported by UKCCIS.

In total 78 delegates were in attendance, 35 Middlesbrough schools were represented alongside two of Middlesbrough's post 16 establishments. Professionals from social care, early help, CAMHS Transformation (Headstart) and Public Health, along with elected members were also in attendance. Feedback from delegates was extremely positive, with 65 per cent of attendees confirming that they had increased their knowledge of digital safeguarding as a result of their attendance. It was felt that the event had been a much needed conference. Efforts were being made to secure corporate sponsorship for future conferences and would also aim to involve the mobile technology companies.

In response to the recommendation that children and young people be provided with a 3 point plan of 'what to do if this happens to me' it was advised that since the review the UK Council for Child Internet Safety had designed a 4 point plan. The plan was based on the 4 main elements of digital resilience: Understand, Know, Learn and Recover.

However, when undertaking a piece of work with children and young people in Middlesbrough around what digital resilience meant it was clear that their understanding was very vague. A competition was therefore launched to allow our children to design their own 4 point plan. With the aim of rewording the 4 points so it was memorable for young people. An entry from Unity City Academy (UCS) was the forerunner at present with the acronym 'digital ITCH'; identify, talk, change, help. The work served to demonstrate that the 'Voice of the Child' was being heard and acted upon in Middlesbrough.

The panel's recommendation that schools listened to children and young people regularly to ensure they were aware of the most up to date information in respect of 'sexting' taking place

in the school / wider community had been taken on board. It was evident from the feedback received via the Digital Safeguarding Network Forum that schools had engaged more with young people on this issue. The panel had also recommended that the 'Digital Leaders' Program was promoted in all schools across the town.

The Digital Resilience Manager advised that following the development of the Diana Awards Digital Ambassador / Be Strong programme the decision had been taken to utilise this nation package rather than develop our own. Sixteen young People from UCA were had been selected and travelled to Leeds to be trained under the Diana Awards Digital Ambassador / Be Strong scheme. Eight of those had chosen to continue with the scheme and would be training other young people in Middlesbrough schools. Acklam Grange School had expressed an interest in the programme, as had the Children In Care Council.

Following Middlesbrough's involvement, the Diana Award project had negotiated with Vodafone and obtained additional funding to run the 'Be Strong Programme' for schools across the North East of England. An event had been held at UCA on 22 March 2018, which had involved the training of 120 young digital ambassadors. The Gazette had covered the story and a representative from the Diana Awards Digital Ambassador / Be Strong programme had advised that they would be using the video footage filmed at UCA as part of their national training resource. The Members commented that they were very proud that the Be Strong programme had been brought to Middlesbrough and it was a really good success story.

In respect of the recommendation that the use of drama be used (as with Chelsea's Choice) to deliver information and advice to young people on this issue it was noted that progress had also been made. Although an existing national resource could not be identified the Risk and Resilience Team had negotiated a joint venture with Middlesbrough College drama students. The students and lecturers had agreed to develop a short drama around the impact and consequences of sending and sharing inappropriate images. Based on Romeo and Juliet, it was hoped that the play entitled 'To Send or Not To Send?' would be shown to all Year 8 pupils in Middlesbrough. A dress rehearsal of the performance was scheduled for 1pm at My Place on 26 March 2018 and all Members of the panel were welcome to attend.

During discussion the following points were made:

- The establishment of the Digital Safeguarding Network Forum had ensured that regular feedback had been received about what was happening in schools. It had allowed additional monitoring of trends and a town wide awareness of the use of dangerous / inappropriate apps to be generated. Teacher feedback was regularly provided.
- Members were confident that as a result of the work undertaken on youth produced sexual imagery (sexting) it was at the top of the agenda in most schools.
- An elected Member training event on the topic was scheduled for 8 May 2018 and all Members were welcome to attend. The programme would cover what young people were doing online and the applications used, how much was it happening, Wolak and Finklehor's sexting Typology, Outcome 21 guidance and what it meant for Police forces, as well as nationally recommended education resources.

The view was expressed that in light of all the work undertaken in relation to youth produced sexual imagery over the last year a much strengthened approach was now evident. The Chair thanked the officers for their presentation and congratulated them on the excellent work undertaken. The officers advised that they wanted Middlesbrough to be the safest place in the UK for young people to grow up online.

Agreed that the update be noted and a further update be provided in 6 months' time.

3   **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD UPDATE**

The Chair provided a verbal update on the matters considered at the Overview and Scrutiny

Board meeting on 20 February and 13 March 2018.

4   **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING - MONDAY, 23 APRIL 2018 AT 10.30AM**