

**Needs Analysis Report**  
**following the**  
**Sexual Exploitation of**  
**Children in Rotherham**



**Final report:**  
**October 2015**

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# THE PROJECT TEAM

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**Dr Dan Allen** is a Lecturer in Social Work. A Registered Social Worker, he has been working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller young people, families and communities for 13 years.

**Dr Phil Brown** is Professor of Social Change and Director of the Sustainable Housing and Urban Studies Unit. Phil has 10 years' experience of delivering externally funded research and evaluation projects on a range of topics which often embrace community based work with marginalised communities.

**Karan Sanghera** completed her LLB Law at the University of Essex and is also a BPTC graduate. She has previously worked for a range of not-for-profit and charity organisations, including financial bodies, race equality organisations and working with ex-offenders. Karandeep is currently co-working on a report on child abuse in the Muslim Community; this report is due to be published in the autumn of this year. She is also currently studying part time for her masters in International Human Rights and Social Justice.

**Rehaila Sharif** is a lecturer and freelance trainer living in Sheffield. Her professional background is in post 16 FE and community education, community-based training and voluntary sector management. She has worked in a range of statutory and Third Sector organisations. Her strengths lie in project development and innovation, and facilitating group learning.

**Jo Lees** is a Director of Clifton Learning Partnership based in Rotherham. She has over 20 years' experience, working with young people, children and adults in both community and statutory settings. In the 1990's she worked in Keighley and Bradford, managing a range of community based provision within 'multi-ethnic' / largely BME communities. In 2001, she returned to her home town of Rotherham, to work in a youth setting before broadening out into a wider Safeguarding Children and Families role within the local authority and latterly within Early Help services. Between 2012 and January 2015, Jo was the lead officer in Children and Young People's Services for EU Migrants.

**Jayne Senior** manages the Swinton Lock Activity Centre and previously managed the Risky Business project. Her career in youth work began in 1988, she became the CSE trainer for RMBC in 2005 and safeguarding lead for the youth service in 2006. In 2010 Jayne received a district commanders award for her work in sharing intelligence and safeguarding. More recently, Jayne has worked alongside Sarah champion to ensure support for survivors and their families.

## Acknowledgements:

To all participants who contributed to the needs analysis, often risking emotional distress to share their experiences, fears and hopes for the future.

To **Munir Hussain**, Community activist, working on behalf of Apna Haq

To **Jo Smith**, CSE Support Services Co-ordinator, RMBC, for valuable assistance throughout.



## Forward by Donna Peach

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It has been an immense honour to listen to the experiences of the people of Rotherham. The project team received a warm welcome and felt humbled at the extraordinary courage of victims, survivors and their families. We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to everyone who took part in the study. The knowledge and opinions shared by our participants are the foundation of this report.

No-one wants to think about what child sexual abuse and exploitation really means. Recognising that children have been humiliated, raped and tortured is extremely distressing. As such, it is no surprise that many felt anger and rage when they understood that those with authority failed to protect vulnerable children and young people.

There is a need to face the awful reality that child sexual abuse has always happened. However, in the age of the internet, the number of children at risk of sexual abuse has increased. Those who sexually abuse children are mostly, but not always, men. Not discounting the vast number of boys who have suffered abuse, most of the known victims of sexual abuse are girls. Both victims and perpetrators come from every walk of life. The threat is such that we all have a responsibility to consider what we can do to protect every child in our family and communities.

The public criticism of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) and South Yorkshire Police, following Professor Jay's report was right and inevitable. Positively, there have been several examples of how RMBC and South Yorkshire Police have responded to criticism and improved the way they respond to victims and survivors. However, there have also been negative consequences of public scrutiny, with many people in the study reporting that they want to regain pride in their hometown.

Those who took part in this study did not shy away from exploring the difficulties they face. Naturally, participants continue to talk about issues of trust, as past mistakes created a sense of vulnerability. However, there is also evidence that healing is taking place. Many participants made suggestions of how they and RMBC could and should collaborate to strengthen, individuals, families and their communities

Indeed, there is a determination to meet current and future needs with a sense of collective rigour. Some of these tasks involve developing internal structures, such as communication and the provision of appropriate resources. Rotherham, like many other towns and cities in Britain, is also faced with external threats which can exacerbate internal challenges. An example of this is how recognition of the involvement of some men of Asian Pakistani heritage, in the abuse of children in Rotherham, led some political groups to capitalise on fears. However, it is clear that children are best protected in resilient families and communities. Thankfully, Rotherham and its people continue to demonstrate resilience.

In addition, there is also a strong sense of realism, no-one in Rotherham expects perfection, but they do expect to do everything possible to protect children and young people. One woman made the distinction between surviving and thriving:

*“...I don't want to survive,  
I want to thrive...”*

We hope this report contributes to that aim and welcome your views on the findings from data collected between April and June 2015. We recognise that the data is reflective of views expressed at that time and that RMBC and the people of Rotherham, have continued to respond to needs throughout the course of this analysis process. To offer your views on this report please use the following link <http://hub.salford.ac.uk/cypsae>

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the findings of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Rotherham by Professor Alexis Jay; Rotherham MBC responded to the immediate needs of victims by increasing the capacity of the voluntary sector to provide additional post abuse support.

The Council is now in the process of developing longer term proposals for an integrated 'open door' model of flexible and accessible service provision for victims of CSE. This is in tandem with RMBC refreshing its overall multiagency CSE 'Prevent, Protect and Pursue' strategy.

To support this aim the Council, led by Public Health, instructed the University of Salford to provide research governance of the needs analysis. As an academic partner, the University worked alongside voluntary and community organisations commissioned by RMBC, to gain access to the population of Rotherham with a specific focus on under-represented minority groups.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To gain understanding and insight into the views of victims, survivors and their families affected by CSE from all sections of the population of Rotherham.
- To better understand the scale and nature of child sexual abuse and exploitation as it affects the diversity of minority groups in Rotherham, with particular emphasis on Roma/Slovak and Asian communities.
- To understand any particular barriers to disclosure and accessing support experienced by and within these minority communities.

- To draw together evidence on best practice, locally, nationally, and internationally on how to understand and respond to diverse needs within these minority communities in the area of sexual abuse and exploitation.
- To make recommendations on effective responses to CSE which will better address the full diversity of needs and experiences within the whole Rotherham population.

## METHOD

Qualitative and quantitative methods were adopted to offer both breadth and depth of understanding of the needs of the people of Rotherham in relation to CSE. Therefore, focus groups and individuals interviews were undertaken in addition to the use of online questionnaires. The research was designed to be accessible to children, young people and adults. The locally commissioned agencies ensured that their teams comprised of research assistants who spoke multiple languages and were able to translate where necessary.

Each agency collated qualitative data, which was subject to cyclical thematic analysis. The university team completed analysis for each individual data set before integrating themes to provide holistic insight into the needs of the diverse population of Rotherham. Throughout the report participant discourses are included to illuminate their experiences, opinions and needs.

The project team developed two online questionnaires, one designed to explore young people's (13-18 years) social media use and online-sexualised behaviour. A second broader survey was aimed at adults living and working in Rotherham. Each questionnaire received more than 200 responses, with the adult survey also encouraging 73 respondents to provide further comment. Where applicable, some of these views are included within the report, in addition to the descriptive statistics emerging from each survey.

Finally, RMBC also commissioned the four voluntary agencies to undertake outreach work with their designated populations. These activities are summarised within the report.

## OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

- Broad definitions suggest the terms CSE and CSA are largely interchangeable. Indeed, all child sexual abuse is exploitative. However, clarity of the varied and changeable ways in which offenders target their victims would facilitate our ability to prevent future abuse.
- Positively, there are signs of renewed trust, however, previous failing of RMBC and the police had affected public confidence. Some participants commented that media coverage of the issue had positioned a critical lens over the town that affected everybody.
- An ethos is developing in Rotherham that protecting children is everybody's responsibility. The needs analysis reflects that it is often the people closest to a child who will first observe any difference in their behaviour. Therefore, public engagement with professional bodies is crucial to the success of any CSE strategy.
- The population of Rotherham is predominantly of white British origin. However, members of all communities voiced a sense of belonging to and having pride in being from Rotherham. However, since the Jay report, tensions have risen and some participants felt that groups such as the English Defence league had attempted to exploit these.
- How these racial tensions are experienced was particularly stark in the discourses from young people. It is a timely reminder that the actions of those who abuse children can affect many innocent bystanders. Thus, it is vital that any strategy to combat those who abuse children also includes a focus on strengthening families and communities.
- There is a need to develop materials for all communities to support members of the public and professionals to feel equipped to raise issues of CSE. Materials should be culturally appropriate and accessible to those with learning difficulties or other disabilities. It is important that educational materials move beyond raising awareness to encourage the population to feel confident enough to act to protect.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Across the world the sexual abuse of children remains an issue of epidemic proportions (Modelli, Galvão & Pratesi, 2010; UNICEF, 2014). Despite increased awareness of the proliferation of sexual abuse, estimates suggest 120 million (1 in 10) girls/women under 20 years of age are subjected to a forced sexual encounter (UNICEF, 2014). In Britain it has been a criminal offence to sexually abuse a child since the early 19th Century. However, the police recording of crimes survey (2013) shows that one in five women in the UK have reported being the victim of a sexual offence since the age of 16 years. This historic and global landscape is important if we are to make sense of the scale of child sexual abuse (CSA) and understand the dynamics, which constrain our ability to prevent its occurrence.

Although, all child sexual abuse is exploitative, the means by which adults perpetrate this atrocity comes in different guises. Thus, the multidimensional nature of child sexual abuse demands a comprehensive and multifaceted approach. The trafficking of children for sexual and other exploitative means has been a focus of national and international policy for several decades. However, a progressive attitude that views those who are trafficked as victims rather than criminals has only developed in the last 15 years (Munro, 2005).

Critically, the meaning we make from the language used in our laws and policies is fundamental to our view of and response to child sexual abuse. This report will consider some of these issues as they relate to our understanding of the term child sexual exploitation (CSE). In addition, the social context of what led Rotherham to this point in its history is also explored. Many participants have generously offered individual accounts of their experiences of historic and current child sexual exploitation. These are captured within this report to add further texture to what is already understood, and the implications for a renewal of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's (RMBC) CSE strategy.

The extent of the sexual exploitation of children and young people from Rotherham was exposed during Professor Alexis Jay's inquiry. There was outrage and horror at the 1,400 children estimated to have been abused between 1997 and 2013. In addition, Jay's report revealed some detail of the torture that many children and young people had suffered. Unsurprisingly, the report caused public anger not only towards the identified male perpetrators of 'Pakistani heritage' but also towards those in positions of responsibility who had failed to act.

Following the concerns raised by Jay's inquiry, the Secretary of State instructed Louise Casey CB, to conduct an Inspection of RMBC which resulted in a view that it was 'not fit for purpose'. Casey's report dated 4 February 2015, led to the introduction of five commissioners to manage the Council's executive functioning and to improve services.

Subsequently, this needs analysis was commissioned to help identify what services are needed as part of a renewed CSE strategy which aims to:-

- Prevent the sexual exploitation of children
- Protect those at risk or victimised
- Pursue those responsible.

Although this report will mainly focus on a strategy for RMBC, the data collected also makes multiple references to the need for the police to renew their strategy. A review of historic police involvement is due to be undertaken by Professor Drew. In addition, Operation Stovewood, an independent National Crime Agency investigation is currently examining criminal allegations of non-familial child sexual exploitation. These ongoing investigations will lead to further publicised information which will require RMBC to review and communicate any relevance this has to its CSE strategy.

Historic and international evidence demonstrate that responding effectively to the sexual exploitation of children is hugely difficult. RMBC have to meet this task while simultaneously rejuvenating systems and services under a critical public spotlight. Transparent communication at all levels remains vital to the renewal of trust. The commissioning of this needs analysis has provided another opportunity for the people of Rotherham to share their views and experiences with the council. As expected there were negative views expressed about the past failures of the Council, the police and certain individuals. For some there remains a sense of anger and distrust of those in authority. Some of these views were expressed by members of the public towards the council, police and social care. Other criticisms arose between professionals, particularly from individuals who felt they had been marginalised and discredited prior to the publication of Jay's report.

Equally important to potentially destabilising factors from historical failures, is the stability of current leadership. During this analysis comments about the 'interim' status of leading professionals were made. There was a view expressed that the Government were now in charge of Rotherham, and several participants felt the Government's continued financial and moral commitment was crucial to their success. Reports from Jay and Casey reveal the intricate relationship between an 'unfit' Council and the failure to protect children from sexual abuse. Thus, we cannot separate any renewal strategy for CSE from the development of trust in the future leaders of RMBC.

Furthermore, Rotherham's past failures to identify and respond to the needs of sexually exploited children have led to significant divisions between the White British and South Asian Pakistani populations. How these divisions are experienced was particularly stark in the discourses from young people. As such, it will be important to ensure that strategies are in place to support and replenish the town's multi-ethnic community relationships.

This research explores needs specific to Rotherham, but also examines the British social context within which they exist. Participants reveal insight into the complexity of misogyny and its relationship to the gendered issue of child sexual abuse. Although, this should not dismiss the impact on male victims or discount the responsibility of female abusers, recognition of both broad and specific issues is essential. This has particular relevance as we begin to explore how to prevent and respond to the sexual abuse of children within and between different populations.

The publicity of RMBC's failure to protect children from predatory sexual abusers has led to a sense of public shame. Within the data, this emerged as personal, professional and collective shame. At times anger was directed at others, on other occasions expressions of guilt and remorse were expressed. Several participants spoke of wanting to disassociate from Rotherham, to the extent that they would tell people that they lived elsewhere.

Some respondents spoke of their ongoing work with victims and survivors, while many others had no idea where they would turn for help. Most of those interviewed revealed a desire for direction, resources and leadership. There were some expressions of apathy and many expressed trepidation about the future of Rotherham. However, abundant in the responses was a desire to contribute to the protection of their children and a renewal of pride in their home town.

The project team and their respective organisations are humbled by contributions the people of Rotherham have made to this study. This report aims to capture their individual experiences and make sense of their collective needs. While protecting participants' anonymity, the report will as necessary, draw on individual accounts to illuminate specific and shared needs.

## THE STIMULUS FOR THE ANALYSIS

Following the findings of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (1997-2013) by Professor Alexis Jay, published October 2014, Rotherham Council responded to the immediate needs of victims of child sexual exploitation by increasing the capacity of the voluntary and community sector organisations across Rotherham to provide additional post abuse support. The Council is now in the process of developing with partners the longer term proposals for an integrated 'open door' model of flexible and accessible service provision for victims of CSE, and refreshing the overall multiagency CSE 'Prevent, Protect and Pursue Strategy. Led by Public Health the Council commissioned a needs analysis led by an academic partner that would work alongside voluntary and community organisations to access under-represented minority groups.

## OVERALL AIMS

To inform Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's child sexual exploitation support provision and child sexual exploitation strategy

## OVERALL OBJECTIVES

- To gain understanding and insight into the views of victims and survivors and families affected by CSE from all sections of the population of Rotherham.
- To better understand the scale and nature of child sexual abuse and exploitation as it affects the diversity of minority groups in Rotherham, with particular emphasis on Roma/Slovak and Asian communities.
- To understand any particular barriers to disclosure and accessing support experienced by and within these minority communities.
- To draw together evidence on best practice, locally, nationally, internationally, on understanding and responding to diverse needs within these minority communities in the

area of sexual abuse and exploitation.

- To make recommendations on effective responses to CSE which will better address the full diversity of needs and experiences within the whole Rotherham population.

## ROLE OF ACADEMIC PARTNER

The University of Salford has ensured the highest standards of quality in the research undertaken, as part of this needs analysis. This includes the ethical approval of the research design to protect the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of participants. In addition, the University team has supported the researchers from each of the commissioned agencies, providing both guidance and practical support.

This report and the richness of its content would not have been possible without the commitment and expertise of the agency researchers and the people of Rotherham who made generous and insightful contributions.

## COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Four Rotherham based voluntary organisations were commissioned by RMBC to work alongside the University to undertake research for the CSE needs analysis. Apna Haq and Clifton Learning Partnership respectively engaged with the Borough's Asian and Roma communities. Whereas, Rotherham Women's Refuge and Swinton Lock Activity Centre were commissioned to capture the views of the wider population.

Established within Rotherham, each of these voluntary organisations already provide support to vulnerable children and adult populations who could be subject to sexual violence. As such, they were also commissioned to continue and develop outreach work, which was separate to the defined role of the University's ethically approved research activities.

**Apna Haq** has operated for 21 years in Rotherham ensuring that its domestic abuse services support women from black, minority and ethnic communities. However, it also supports victims and survivors of sexual exploitation raising awareness of this issue with strategic and local partners. In November 2014, Apna Haq in partnership with the Muslim women's network organised a conference raising issues of sexual exploitation attended by 20 women from the community as well as over 50 other participants. Apna Haq has links with a number of schools, colleges and their safeguarding teams. It has experience of delivering workshops regarding honour based violence and forced marriage. In this study, Apna Haq undertook focus groups with both adults and young people. They also completed individual interviews for adults who wanted to contribute to the analysis without participating in a group.

**Clifton Learning Partnership (CLP)** was first established in 1999 as part of the Excellence in Cities initiative and has evolved into community-based work with children and families from diverse communities. The Partnership delivers and provides community development and outreach activity, learning and group activities as well as one to one and family support services. Its base at Eastwood Village Community Centre provides a hub of community-based activities and a safe and supportive space for local people including Rotherham's migrant Roma communities to seek advice and support.

CLP undertook awareness raising, consultation and research specifically with Rotherham's migrant Roma communities. The approach aimed to both increase awareness and understanding of CSE within the Roma communities; and through consultation and focus group activity secure a greater understanding of the impact and scale of CSE; the barriers to reporting; and the specific support needs of Roma in relation to CSE.

CLP undertook activities in Eastwood and Ferham with adult community members, parents and young people. In light of their previous experience of working with the Roma community CLP engaged on a family level to explore wider views and opinions. They offered parents the opportunity to participate in the research.

**Rotherham RISE (RR)** has 30 years' experience of working with survivors (and their families) that have experienced domestic and sexual abuse. In accordance with their Borough wide focus, RR encouraged those who live or work in Rotherham to complete online surveys; one for adults and one for young people aged 13 to 18 years. The data collected from these surveys was completely anonymous. In addition, RR conducted focus groups with adults and young people across the borough. RR also undertook one-to-one interviews with adults across Rotherham. RR also has a specialist CSE outreach team who provide support to those who have experienced, are experiencing or are at risk of CSE. Support is currently offered to both male and female, young people and adults.

**Swinton Lock Activity Centre (SLA)** is currently offering support to 125 difficult to engage children and young people including those with disabilities. The centre also offers support to 120 vulnerable adults including those that face many social disadvantages, 25 of whom are volunteering within the centre. This team has established working relationships with PACE (parents against child sexual exploitation), South Yorkshire Police, Housing, Health and other specialists who work to meet the individual needs of victims and survivors.

Attached to Swinton Lock is Jayne Senior who previously managed the Risky Business Project, which was successfully developed to encourage and support the voices and experiences of those involved in or at risk of CSE. Using arts and multimedia resources Jayne Senior convened a series of focus groups to support young people and parents to contribute to the Needs Analysis. Outreach work included collating survey data to explore the way in which adults and young people using SLA make sense of CSE.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

The ethically approved research design consists of a mixed methodology using both qualitative and quantitative methods. In addition to two online surveys, a range of individual interviews and focus groups were undertaken. These followed a semi-structured interview design. This model facilitates a coherent research framework that accommodates difference across the various participant populations. Qualitative data was captured in digital audio recordings and thematically analysed (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In addition, two online questionnaires were designed one for adults and one for young people aged 13 to 18 years. Karan Sanghara, researcher from Rotherham Rise designed the youth survey which focused on young people's use of social media. The adult survey was aimed at adults who lived and worked in Rotherham. This questionnaire used a Likert scale to survey participant's views on CSE. 73 respondents also chose to leave further comment and these have been included into the tapestry of data included in this analysis.



### Focus and family groups

A range of group discussions were undertaken by all four voluntary agencies. In total, 16 groups which involved 73 adults and young people were completed. Participants in group discussions were predominantly women and girls. Some groups were specifically designed to capture the views of the Roma community and of South Asian women and girls. Efforts to convene group discussions with men from the South Asian population proved unsuccessful.

### Interviews

Individual interviews were offered to adults, and in total 32 interviews were completed. There were several occasions when extra assurance about participant anonymity was sought. In response further assurance was given by the Principal Investigator which supported people to participate in the study. The majority of participants interviewed were women.

### Participants – Young person's questionnaire

The youth questionnaire received 249 responses. 70% of respondents were aged 14 years and below. 54.7% identified as female, 37.9% as male and 2.5% as transgender. Participants were mostly of White British origin (85.2%).

### Participants - Adult questionnaire

The adult survey received 236 responses. 36.9% of participants were aged less than 40 years and 60.6% aged over 40 years of age. Almost three quarters (72.9%) of adult responses were from women. Participants were mainly of White British origin (76.7%).

### 3. AGENCIES OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

As per commissioning guidelines, each voluntary agency undertook outreach work with their designated population. These outreach activities were designed based upon the knowledge of each agency about how best to engage their relevant communities. This ranged from consultation activities with approximately 300 children, young people and adults. All outreach activities were beyond the research governance of the University of Salford and therefore not subject to ethical approval. These outreach activities are summarised below.

#### **Apna Haq**

Apna Haq sought to engage with a wide variety of religious, educational, advocacy, and other Asian community based organisations in addition to community activists in order to access a broad range of people within the Asian community of Rotherham. They achieved good engagement with women children and young people, but were less successful engaging men from the Asian community. The following outstanding needs and concerns were identified:

- That girls are currently subject to sexual abuse but a lack of trust in services prevents them from coming forward.
- Fear of honour based violence from family and community ensures silence is being maintained. In addition to the need for intervention to develop safe community practices.
- Professionals are not equipped to raise issues of CSE within communities as materials are generic focused and do not include issues of shame and honour linked to victim blaming attitudes.
- Current services do not reflect an understanding of the impact of the notions of shame and honour and so do not support victims to come forward.

- If girls did come forward current generic services would not have workers with culturally specific understanding i.e shame honour issues impact on victims.
- There is a need to develop a model of support for girls from minoritised groups.
- Further research is needed to understand how to work with families to overcome these immense challenges.
- Major development work to do above to develop safe disclosure and safe support pathways that instill confidence in young women.

#### **What is needed to inform future services?**

- Training and resources need to be developed and delivered that reflect the lived realities of Asian women.
- Training for all professionals on culturally sensitive practice. Understanding that dominant western perceptions of choice might contrast starkly with the beliefs of children and adults within the Asian community. Thus, mediating steps are required to bridge the gaps so young Asian girls and women can engage with protective services and then feel understood.
- Challenges to the victim blaming attitudes that have emerged from the research findings.

- Continued efforts to engage with male Asian population. However, to be aware that RMBC engagement with Mosque Leaders excludes the voices of women. A meeting in the Spring of 2015 between the Commissioners and Mosque Leaders caused some concern to Apna Haq. This demonstrates the importance of clarity and transparency in all communications. This issue is addressed later in this report.
- Continued engagement with schools, colleges and other community groups and activists.



### ***Clifton Learning Partnership***

This project implemented a participatory public engagement methodology that intended to reach out to Rotherham's migrant Roma communities. The objective was to support self-identified victims and survivors of CSE, their family and wider community members, with the opportunity to share their lived experiences so that voices could be heard.

Grounded in the assumptions of equal participation and active engagement, the project provided a flexible and accessible response to the needs of people who are often labelled as a 'hard to reach community' living in Eastwood, Ferham and the town centre. Based upon extensive and ongoing community engagement, the project team recognised the challenges in engaging Rotherham's migrant Roma Communities.

Between 27th March 2015 and 9th May 2015, the Clifton Learning Partnership facilitated a series of out-reach activities in Eastwood and Ferham from the town centre. These activities were completed in the community, in people's homes and in various community centres. Key messages from the "Say something if you see something" and "Spot the signs" campaigns were delivered by Roma community out-reach workers to community members with the view to increase community engagement and provide an effective conduit for inviting Roma people to engage in the participatory research process.

The first participatory public engagement meeting, facilitated specifically to enable Roma people to help plan and design the methodological choices and research questions which would be used for the formal study, was held on the on the 27th March 2015. This event was attended, voluntarily, by 11 Roma people (6 women and 5 men). Based upon their knowledge of CSE, they decided, and advised that the formal research project would initially do well to engage the wider Roma community with the following research schedule:

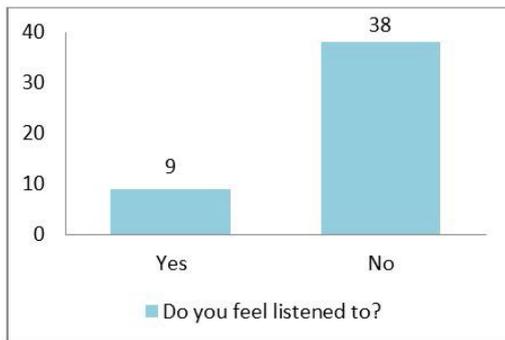
1. Why is this (CSE) happening?
2. How can my identity be protected if I complain?
3. Why don't the police tell our children to go home after a certain hour from a certain age?
4. How should we correctly bring up our children?

These suggestions were then discussed and reviewed against the project objectives. After this participation public engagement event, it was agreed that further outreach activity should be undertaken in Eastwood and Ferham to promote CSE awareness. These projects were convened at The Eastwood Village Community Centre, Central Children's Centre and My Place Young People's Centre.

**Swinton Lock Activity Centre**

As part of their outreach work Swinton Lock Activity Centre (SLA) undertook art work sessions with children and adults who had been affected by CSE. In addition to a community open day, they also designed their own survey to seek the views of adults and children who frequent their service. They surveyed 47 young people, first asking if they feel listened to. Figure 1 suggests that 38 do not.

Figure 1. Do you feel listened to?



In relation to the signs of child sexual exploitation listed in the ‘Standing Together’ initiative, the sense of not being ‘listened to’ could be considered as an additional concern that could impact on an individual’s susceptibility to risk. Closely associated with positive emotional wellbeing, the need to feel ‘listened to’ is arguably related to a sense of social exclusion and the way in which a young person might think, feel and behave.

By engaging young people in the outreach project, SLA were able to identify that 45% of the young people who engaged in the survey were actively taking part in criminal activities or abusing substances. According to the known reversible signs of child sexual exploitation, this finding is one of the signs of a child at potential risk of CSE. 70% of young people responding to SLA survey did not know what the term ‘grooming’ meant. However, we recognise that the word ‘grooming’ is open to variability in interpretation and have seen this in the examples of outreach described as part of the wider study. More than a third of the young people reportedly did not know the age of consent, suggesting the need to support an educational programme.

The parents working with SLA report that support should come from an organisation independent from the council and police. All agreed that they and their child would have benefited from increased knowledge and awareness of CSE. As the behaviour of young people changed, parents felt that they were not effectively supported to manage or understand this change. Instead, as the young person was seen as being a ‘trouble maker’, the risk of CSE was overlooked. Being blamed for behaviour made parents feel guilty, thus causing them to overlook or seek to make sense of the potential antecedent of and new or unwanted behaviour. The inability to ‘move on’ was also reflected in the suggestion that people had to live among the perpetrators of CSE.

For some, the experience of seeing the perpetrators of their abuse, in the street or local community, was a particularly traumatic event. For some, a sense of justice had not been served, as abusers were moving freely around the local area. For others, the association between CSE and area within which they lived was also a strong and disconcerting factor.

**Rotherham RISE**

Rotherham RISE, formerly Rotherham Women’s Refuge, is committed to supporting young people and women who have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse. They have, since the beginning of the year Rotherham Rise has also provided child sexual exploitation support for young people who are experiencing, have experienced or at risk of experiencing child sexual exploitation. This work also involves working with adults (both male and female) who have experienced historical child sexual exploitation. This team is called Project Survive.

Project Survive work with males and females. Young People aged 9-18 (Prevention work) Young people and adults 12-18+ (one-to-one work). The project completed one-to-one work with 13-18 year olds who have experienced, are experiencing or who are at risk of experiencing CSE. They have also completed one-to-one sessions with 18+ year olds who have experiences of historic CSE. Project Survive have also delivered

prevention work in schools, both primary and secondary and also in colleges. This has also been extended out to parents of pupils.

Children as young as 9 years have Facebook accounts, with many stating that their parents have created these accounts for them. Many of those on Facebook also stated that their parents or carers did not check what they did online. During sessions with primary school children, it was evident that many had been exposed to inappropriate content for their age groups.

Many reported having watched films and played electronic games with age classifications of 18+. There was also an incident of a year 5 child stating that an older peer had tried to force him to watch extreme pornographic content. Although this was an isolated incident, it sheds light on the fact that some children are exposed to this type of material.

There are also issues with primary school children not understanding how to keep themselves safe. A key example which highlights this is a year five class where the children were unsure of who could be classified as a stranger. In a 'circle of trust' exercise, children placed the outreach workers in their 'most trusted circle' even though they had only interacted with them for around two hours. It was evident that the children's thought processes were reactive to rather than preventative of risky situations.

School sessions, especially at primary school age have been very successful. Children as young as 9 years have been fully

engaged in the sessions and provided positive feedback. Their work during sessions also demonstrates that preventative outreach activities are necessary when tackling CSE. Children were asked to draw what they thought a perpetrator of CSE looks like, and many drew men, who were old, and had poor hygiene. After the session, they all understood how diverse the range of perpetrators were. This age group took matters more seriously and listened more intently than younger secondary school students.

At secondary school, smaller group work sessions were effective, with activities such as poster making. Some schools have asked Project Survive to provide a rolling programme. At college level, it was evident that the two video aides used (My Dangerous Lover Boy and CEOP's Exploited) engaged pupils who attended the prevention session offered by Project Survive.

There were concerns however, that My Dangerous Lover Boy, whilst still hard-hitting and effective, looked dated. CEOP's film exploited, again, whilst effective, was aimed at a younger audience. This leads to the conclusion that hard-hitting videos are a good tool and should be used when interacting with young people. However, the content and style of these videos need to be relevant to the young people being spoken to.



## 4. Child Sexual Exploitation

### DEFINING CSE

Understanding what is meant by the term child sexual exploitation is important, particularly if we are to ensure that both professionals and the public can feel confident in identifying and reporting it. If the sexual abuse of a child is always exploitative, we need to examine how the terms child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child sexual abuse (CSA) are or are not related. This is a complex task against an increasingly worrying landscape of our society's historic and contemporary failure to recognise, prevent and respond to the prolific sexual abuse of our children.

The Government definition of CSE (2013):

*“Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.”*

The World Health Organisation definition of CSA (1999)

*“Child sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that*

*violates the laws or social taboos of society. Child sexual abuse is evidenced by this activity between a child and an adult or another child who by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. This may include but is not limited to:*

1. *The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;*
2. *The exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;*
3. *The exploitative use of children in pornographic performance and materials”.*

These broad definitions suggest the terms CSE and CSA are largely interchangeable. However, greater clarity of their differences would facilitate the formation of more distinctive offender typologies. This distinction should offer greater definition of the modus operandi of the organised gangs and groups who are known to target and traffic children and young people. Although, much is yet to be understood about how the recently identified CSE gangs in Britain compare to, or interact with the behaviour of other paedophile networks. Ultimately, greater comprehension of the problem will translate into more effective safeguarding policies and practices (Berelowitz et al., 2012, 2013).

To assist this process of understanding, Brayley and Cockbain (2014) examined the concept of internal child sex trafficking and child sexual exploitation within the UK. In doing so, they further distinguish child trafficking as a specific type of CSE. Worryingly, they highlight disagreements between the key national agencies, UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) and the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), about how to identify a British victim who has been trafficked within Britain. Although they recognise the need for further deliberation of a useful definition they offer suggestions of the components which should be included (Table 1).

Table 1 Criteria for inclusion in the proposed internal child sex trafficking definition

Category	Criteria for inclusion	Purpose of criteria
<b>Offenders</b>	Child, aged 17-years old or younger Adult, aged 18 years or older Two or more offenders involved	<b>To meet national and international definitions of a child</b> <b>To exclude peer-on-peer offending</b> <b>To ensure consistency with the UK definition of organised crime</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	Any mode of transport	<b>To include all forms of movement</b>
<b>Movement</b>	No minimum distance required 'Integral' to the abuse process	<b>To ensure victims are not arbitrarily excluded from the definition</b> <b>To emphasise that this is deliberate movement without which the abuse cannot occur. Defined as movement to a location where the sexual abuse will take place.</b>
<b>Abuse pattern</b>	<b>At least one victim must be abused more than once</b>	<b>To distinguish internal child sex trafficking from other forms of child sexual abuse</b>

Retrieved from Brayley and Cockbain (2014)

Their proposed criteria attempts to balance both inclusive and specific aspects of behaviour and activity, that constitute the trafficking of children for the purpose of sexually abuse. The need for a definition useful for a multi-agency and national approach needs to remain a primary focus for all concerned. The National Crime Agency (NCA) refer to non- familial child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA). This combination of the CSE/CSA terms while specifying familial and non-familial relationships between perpetrators and victims may prove a useful contribution to defining the nature of this offence.

However, some children also experience abuse within both familial and non-familial relationships and it is important to remain vigilant to the complex network of sexual predatory activities. Failure to do so can lead to some child sex abusers becoming invisible (Itzin, 2001). In addition, there should be care and sensitivity when defining offender typologies and how these should relate or not, to the construction and definition of the children who have been abused.

The reported concerns of child sexual exploitation organised and perpetrated by Asian men of Pakistani heritage is a matter of grave concern. It could be argued that a lack of an agreed definition of the problem contributed to its proliferation. Therefore, we need to ensure that all sexual offences against children are kept firmly in our sights.

### **PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS OF CSE**

During the needs analysis, participants were asked what they thought constituted CSE. Their responses reflect a good understanding of the coercive and diverse nature of grooming both online and in person. Several participants both in youth and adult populations used the term 'brain washing' in place of grooming. Several respondents suggest an abuser could groom a child over many months, if not years, before revealing their true exploitative intent. Some respondents also understood that abusers could manipulate adults, families and communities into believing that they did not present a threat to children.

CSE was described as including direct and indirect activities, such as using photographs of children, exploiting them via online, phone, other electronic activities, or in person. They believed predators of CSE were motivated, by money and/or physical pleasure. They considered those who exploit children to be organised, determined and ever present. Participants felt that children's natural naivety could be manipulated by means of attention, drugs, cigarettes and alcohol.

### **Identifying CSE**

Despite every participant being able to offer a definition of CSE, there was a wide range of responses when asked how they would know if a child was being sexually exploited. Most respondents were able to cite several of the publicised 'signs of potential CSE' available in the Council's literature. However, although some participants worked with young people they did not think they had the tools available to identify this type of sexual abuse.

In the absence of a disclosure of exploitation, most participants focused on changes in behaviour or presentation of a potential victim. They considered this could include, changes in what the child would wear, what language they used, withdrawal from their family and friends. Some young people felt they were in a better position to identify CSE as they had completed awareness education at school/college. A common theme was that CSE was likely to be identified by someone who knew the child well. This has implications for professionals giving due credence to concerns raised by family and friends.

### **Defining 'child' in CSE**

Several respondents raised queries about the age at which a child could be said to be a victim of CSE. There was for some a discrepancy between the legal age (16 years) at which a child could consent to sexual intercourse and their reaching adulthood at 18 years of age. Others made comment about the ongoing vulnerability of people with learning disabilities who may be an adult chronologically but whose comprehension skills may be less developed.

### **Who is at risk of CSE?**

Most respondents believe every child is at risk of sexual exploitation. This inclusive stance was most keenly expressed in relation to children and young people's use of the internet. Children without adequate parental supervision both online and in general, were also identified as 'at risk' by several respondents. Some more specifically equated this to families who were living in economically deprived conditions. Other vulnerabilities were thought to arise from children who were innocently in need of attention for a variety of reasons including family breakdown or disharmony.

Several participants identified some communities as more vulnerable; one of these was the Roma community, which one respondent felt were more vulnerable because of their relatively recent migration to Rotherham and a reported drug problem in the Eastwood area.

Others responded that there was also concern about White British families because of parental apathy in some of the town's council housing estates. The issue of shame was a dominant explanation which prevents disclosure of sexual abuse within Asian families. A consistent theme from both young people and adult respondents was that they would expect to notice a change in the behaviour of someone they knew. This prevalence given to familiarity of victim and a potential safeguarder highlights the importance of a public awareness campaign.

### **EFFECTS OF CSE**

The recognition that the traumatic experience of child sexual abuse, is often associated with other forms of abuse with enduring consequences, has long been recognised (Beitchman et al., 1992). However, our understanding of the affects upon the victim, their family and friends continue to emerge. Research demonstrates links between CSA and psychiatric disorders.

These can include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, eating disorders, substance misuse, personality disorders and an increased risk of suicide throughout a person's life (Horner, 2010). Psychological recovery can be more problematic for children who have been re-victimised by multiple perpetrators (Kellogg & Hoffman, 1997).

In adulthood, the effects of CSA can manifest themselves with victims being at risk of sexual re-victimisation. Furthermore, the cumulative affects of childhood sexual abuse can influence parental behaviour, which can contribute to a pattern of intergenerational abuse. However, the experience of abuse in childhood can also provide a parent with greater awareness of the risks for their own children.

The complexity of the effects of CSE is discussed more fully in the thematic analysis presented later in this report. In summary, the analysis reflects that any response to CSE has to be responsive at both individual and societal levels. This is easier said than done, especially when key concepts such as what age constitutes a child and their subsequent agency to consent to sexual activities. In turn, such complexities add to the confusion of how individual issues are understood and this can be further problematised by what some refer to as the ensuing 'moral panic' as knowledge pricks public consciousness (Cree et al., 2014).

## **PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS**

### ***Effects on the child***

Although respondents were able to identify potential signs of CSE, many felt they would not know if a child they knew was a victim. Many spoke of prevention and early detection in order to minimise the impact on

a child. There was recognition of the pressure for children to have knowledge with which to safeguard themselves in addition to effective support systems that could respond to reported concerns.

### ***Effect on family***

Respondents to this study provided accounts which offer personal insights into the effects of CSE for families. These range from families having to flee their home and city to protect their child from exploitation. Others reflect on how families can be forever changed, with a loss of trust in relationships particularly where one child victim has introduced a sibling to the perpetrators.

### ***Effect on friends***

One respondent spoke eloquently about the impact upon her of bearing witness to the account of a friend who in adulthood disclosed her experience of child sexual exploitation. This story reveals that friends may be the safe keepers of this knowledge when family members and wider society remain unaware.

### ***Effect on community***

The historic failure of Rotherham MBC and the South Yorkshire Police to protect children from sexual exploitation has affected the degree of trust the community has in these agencies. Furthermore, participants shared that significant tensions between different ethnic groups have been exacerbated by media reports and political activity from the English Defence League (EDL) and the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). Several respondents report an unwillingness to admit to living in Rotherham.

## 5. MAIN FINDINGS

The thematic analysis saw the emergence of needs at an individual, familial and community level. Second order coding highlighted subthemes which included fear, trust, insecurity, vulnerability, identity, education, shame, denial, communication, discrimination and power. From these, three superordinate non-hierarchical themes emerge termed structural fault-lines, resistance and renewal, collective cohesion. These themes serve to capture the need to have increased awareness of the challenges that Rotherham faces in light of the occurrence of CSE and of the added vulnerabilities inherent within its communities. The responses from participants reflect narratives of resistance and renewal. This theme captures issues of denial, fear, shame, hope and trust. Importantly, if these are not balanced they could deepen existing fault-lines. Finally, the theme of collective cohesion, illuminates discourses that signify the commitment of individuals to work with others to protect children and renew pride in Rotherham.

### THEME 1: STRUCTURAL FAULT-LINES

#### *Public Trust*

Public consciousness about the actuality and then subsequent reported extent of CSE in Rotherham has left a legacy of blame, accusation and mistrust. Several participants commented that trust had been badly affected, in some cases 'destroyed' and that they felt, in particular, media coverage had pulled down the whole community:

*"In every place there are bad persons and good persons - when they pull a whole community - drag them down."*

Some respondents stated that they were mistrustful of and even angry with, the Council, police and social services for the historic failure to respond adequately to the protection of children and young people. Remarks included that meaningful apologies were yet to be made and two participants frowned upon Councillors who had chosen

not to resign. This criticism and lack of trust in its own Council was furthered by what was described as the 'Government taking over' via the arrival of a team of Commissioners. Some respondents felt that there was an outstanding need for those in positions of power to acknowledge that 'they got it wrong' and are willing and able to put it right.



Such issues also remain prominent in the British media and during the course of this needs analysis, it was announced that Professor John Drew, would lead an inquiry into how South Yorkshire police acted. Confidence in the council and the police is essential if they are to be effective in working collaboratively with the people of Rotherham to safeguard vulnerable children. Participants continue to see a lack of support as a barrier to disclosure:

*"I wouldn't come forward, if I was a victim."*

*"People are not coming forward to report because of a lack of support, things are not being handled properly at the moment."*

However, despite the high public profile of CSE in Rotherham, participants report that it is not part of everyday conversation. Responses reflect that participants were affected by a sense of public shame, to the extent that they made efforts not to identify with Rotherham, preferring to tell people that they originate from Yorkshire or Sheffield. This lack of conscious awareness of CSE resonates through different narratives.

Some participants found the concept of children being sexually abused too difficult to contemplate:

*“It gets me quite angry so I tried to avoid them things, but it’s a bit too deep for me to get over the effect that it’s happening”.*

It may be useful for RMBC to consider adopting some of the concepts of a Truth Commission (TC). Mazzei (2011) reports that TC's work well to assist communities affected by conflict when they engage with public discourses. In addition, to acknowledging and confronting the past TC's recognise the use of social discourses to assign meanings of blame and reconciliation. This creates an integral role for RMBC to establish relationships with all actors, particularly those who are marginalised and repressed. Clearly, this issue is of vital importance to the victims and survivors of sexual abuse. A pathway to giving them a voice in the renewal of services will be discussed in the following theme.

There are greater complexities to navigate when we begin to unravel the marginalisation within the town's Roma and Asian communities. The perceived and in some instances actual threats that permeate within and between the indigenous White British, Asian and Roma communities were highlighted in the data collected. Across the globe, the epidemic sexual abuse of children thrives on secrecy, lies, fear, deceit and manipulation. Thus, to counter these, transparent and open discourses to explore the shadows where it exists are vital. RMBC and other agencies such as the police have to recognise their role and responsibility when contributing to and engaging with public discourses.

In particular, RMBC has to traverse discourses which simultaneously balance contrition with the confidence it has in its ability to implement progressive and effective change. The challenge is further complicated by the tendency of some to use any publicity from the council as an opportunity to express criticism. Some participants assert they do not trust the council to provide adequate services to victims of CSE. However, most looked to the council for this provision. Of the 236 respondents to the adult online survey 58.6% agreed the council should provide support for victims. In addition, 76.3% disagreed with voluntary agencies being the only providers of CSE services. One participant thought the council should speak up about what they are doing.

*“Don’t bury their heads in the sand, be honest, say what you are doing”.*

### **Gendered & Racial Tensions**

It would be incorrect when contemplating gender and racial tensions in Rotherham to assume that this matter is isolated to the town's Asian and Roma communities. Gender and racial dynamics do not exist in isolation and cannot be divorced from other aspects of prejudice and discrimination. There is a concern that specific discourses on gender and race can inflate tensions and contribute to further suspicion and division. However, careful interrogation of issues is essential to the safeguarding of children and communities.

Several issues pertaining to gender, race, religion and culture populated responses throughout the needs analysis study. Some of these were explicitly related to CSE in Rotherham and others implicitly interwoven into the cultural fabric of British society.

## Misogyny

One dominant discourse in the data highlighted the issue of misogyny in 21st Century Britain. This complex phenomenon cannot be fully addressed in the confines of this report. However, it is integral to the expectations of and attitudes towards girls and women in our society. Thus, to support an equality agenda, recognition that women remain a marginalised group in our society should be included in all narratives.

To address the victimisation of women within our society we have to focus on the behaviour and motivations of men. As such, there is a need to develop discourses which enable men to join the discussion and contribute to keeping children and women safe.

Hearing the voices of children and responding to their concerns and disclosures of CSE is vital. This is an important element of any strategy which aims to combat underlying attitudes that children, but particularly girls, have to keep themselves safe. In addition, regard has to be given to the recruitment and grooming, particularly of boys to become abusers. Respondents were clear that these young people should also be classed as victims of CSE. This viewpoint provides an opportunity to consider a variety of exit strategies for different children.

## Exploring Race in CSE

Responses to our CSE needs analysis online survey reflects 96.6% of 236 respondents agreed that men from all cultures could be involved in the sexual exploitation of children. This suggests that ensuring a spotlight remains on all potential perpetrators of child sexual abuse is essential to the protection of children..

Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System (2012) report 75.7% of all sexual offences are committed by white offenders and 9.2% by adults who self-identify ethnically as Asian. To put this in some context the 2011 Census for England and Wales showed the White population at 86% and Asian community at 7.5%.

However, recent media reports about Operation Stovewood, suggest a high proportion of perpetrators of CSE in Rotherham are adult men with an Asian Pakistani heritage. As always, we have to remain vigilant about the context in which statistics are understood.

As part of this needs analysis study, RMBC commissioned Apna Haq to engage with members of the Asian community and Clifton Learning Partnership to collaborate with the Roma population in Rotherham. The contributions of these participants offer insights into the individual, familial and community dynamics that could assist or constrain our ability to keep children safe.

However, they also report a worrying account of communities grappling with internal and external challenges. Although, these issues will be discussed initially as a discrete section of this report, it is important to recognise that Rotherham is a multi-ethnic town and that any future plans should respond to specific needs in a manner which integrates the whole population.

There was a consensus among Asian participants that some Asian men were involved in the sexual exploitation of children in Rotherham. One young person commented:

*"I think it happens a lot".*

Both adult and child participants report there has been increased tension between their communities since the concerns about CSE were publicised. Many participants felt that tensions between the different ethnic communities were exacerbated by the media reports and the subsequent political activities of the English Defence League (EDL) and the United Kingdom Independent Party (UKIP).

Asian teenagers shared that there were visible divisions between '*brown and white children*'. They commented that this was more acute in schools where there was a larger Asian population. They expressed anger that it felt as if the whole Asian community was being blamed for the actions of a minority.

The impact upon them as individuals crystallised when they gave examples of their daily experiences:

*"It affects your daily routine. Lowers your self-esteem, what you wear."*

Their ability to feel safe to express their identity, their selves, resonates with that of other Rotherham residents who no longer feel it is safe to tell people that they live in the Town. These Asian teenagers also revealed some of the difficulties they have living within different cultural norms:

*"We're not allowed to get drunk and that, so we're not allowed to do what they (White British) do, parties, alcohol...If you can't drink, you're not having fun."*

They also recognised that some elements of bias, of stereotypes, also arose within their Asian families.

*"If you're hanging around with white people, they (parents) ask why? They are a bad influence. So it's probably from the Asian side of it too."*

The young participants felt that there was little hope of changing the attitudes that divided the people of Rotherham. When pressed to consider a potential for future of reconciliation, they were able to identify both barriers and possibilities. These will be discussed in a later section of this report.

### **Vulnerability of Roma Community**

Several structures marginalise Roma people within Rotherham. As a new migrant population, they do not have the benefit of an established cultural base. Unlike the indigenous population or other established migrant populations, new migrants do not have the shared community places upon which to scaffold a supportive infrastructure. This can affect their sense of belongingness to the place where they live.

Although, buildings and places to congregate are an important element of community, so are the opportunities for people to integrate within broader community networks. In particular, language was highlighted as a further structural constraint by the Roma people. For all areas of community integration, but with our present focus being CSE, it is essential that information is accessible in a variety of written languages, and audio.

In addition, Roma participants would welcome support to develop their English speaking skills, enabling them to communicate with community services, in addition to monitoring the social media activity of their children. This is vital as statistics reported by the Safeguarding Board in Bradford suggest Roma children are more likely to be identified as at risk of exploitation.

There are multiple reasons for this higher level of vulnerability and poverty was identified by participants as a potential risk factor. One participant tried to make sense of why a Roma child might be sexually exploited within their own community.

*"Maybe it is the fact that Roma people don't have income so they are trying to make money.... maybe they have a good looking daughter and they think they can make money by selling her."*

This needs analysis is not suggesting that Roma children in Rotherham are being exploited in this way, it is aware that the sexual exploitation of children in Romania is a current cause for concern. The NCA and British Embassy Bucharest are utilising the International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) to prevent the exploitation of children in Romania from travelling British sex offenders.

Awareness of the exploitation of children in some European countries, further highlights not only the extent of this issue, but also the necessity that educational materials have to be culturally appropriate if they are to engage multiple audiences. Other contributions from Roma participants reflect their view that the sexual exploitation of children is harmful to the child and the community.

*"(CSE) is bad for us.... it is a shame on a community".*

### **Organised crime**

Systematic targeting of children with the intention of sexually exploiting them was a discourse across all participant populations. Several survivors were able to share experiences of the fear and manipulation of abusive men. Although, it is accepted that perpetrators of sexual abuse are present in all cultures. However, of the victims and survivors that participated in this study most identified their abuser as an Asian man, and often went on to specify Pakistani heritage.

The organised nature of those who are intent on exploiting children is an issue that requires further understanding. It is complex matter requires insight and knowledge across all societal structures. This will enable effective judicial systems to operate, to ensure survivors are supported and work undertaken to prevent future victimisation.

The predatory and determined behaviour of perpetrators can only be combatted with an equally robust response. This is a massive undertaking, not only for Rotherham, but also across British society, indeed across the world. We are only beginning to understand the corrosive impact of CSE on individuals, families and communities. The manipulative behaviours of perpetrators should not be underestimated.

Comments from survivors reflect the depth and breadth of control that was imposed upon them. Often this involved victims misdirecting authority figures, following instructions to tell lies, to keep secrets, to blame others. This raises immense challenges for those delivering services to people currently being victimised, as steps taken to respond to perceived risk, could actually increase harm.

The final note at this stage of the report is the connection of CSE to other areas of organised crime. Participants revealed that perpetrator manipulation is also targeted at adults, families and communities. This control can involve economic dependence, housing, drugs and other aspects of criminal behaviour. However, it is important to recognise that many perpetrators might not appear as menacing to people in authority. Often the grooming behaviours used towards professionals are designed to engender trust and confidence.



## THEME 2: RESISTANCE AND RENEWAL

### *Learning from Survivors*

The need to disclose sexual exploitation is a huge responsibility placed on the most vulnerable members of our society. A child traumatised by the effects of abuse is affected by fear following threats from the abuser(s) and of not being believed. It is important to remain mindful of the experiences of those who have already disclosed, who felt the police behaved arrogantly towards them. Survivors report they were not believed; even made to feel as though they were to blame for their abuse.

Leading on from the initial point of disclosure is the safe sharing of that knowledge. This should include ensuring that the well-being and safety of the children and young people are central to any decisions made.

The development of trust between victims and agencies such as the police and RMBC is essential. The healing of historic wounds will hopefully be aided by Operation Stovewood and Professor Drew's review of Yorkshire Police involvement. However, ensuring appropriate and timely responses to current/future disclosures is crucial to combatting CSE.

### *Cultural constraints*

Across all cultures it is immensely difficult for a child to tell someone that they have been sexually abused. Feelings of fear and shame can be present for all victims. However, the dominance of cultural norms observed within families and communities can prevent disclosure and exacerbate abuse. This can be the same for all communities and often centres on blaming the victim.

A key feature across all populations was the tendency to blame girls for attracting abusers; often by what they wore or how they are perceived to behave and some Roma participants explained:

*"It is our girl's fault, it is because of how they are... They follow [men] for money and stuff... they sleep with*

*them... they sell them [selves].... they get money out of it."*

*"Some girls want it. They are 13-14 and they have already slept with a man."*

Asian participants:

*"There's an assumption, that if your covered, that you are less at risk."*

*"A woman showcasing herself to a man who has the propensity to exploit. Green flag to a man, makes exploitation more likely....take precautions, don't walk in a seductive manner unless you attract the wrong type of attention...I'm not saying women should wear a burka".*

White British participants:

*"There are stereotypes of victims as slags and loose women."*

*"Seen as a little slag"*

*"The girls might not been seen as victims as they were very aggressive towards authority".*

These narratives reflect a view that girls have the responsibility of keeping themselves safe from predatory adult men. These remarks are anchored to socially constructed expectations of how a 'good girl' should behave. These are then reinforced by specific cultural norms and practices. It is important to understand and critique each cultures' gendered practices if we are to have an effective response to CSE.

### **Social Workers' views of CSE victims**

It may be tempting to think that it is only members of the public who place responsibility on girls to protect themselves from CSE. However, we should not be complacent that those who are employed to respond to concerns about CSE are immune from socially imposed understandings. Current ESRC funded research exploring social workers' understanding of CSE and exploited girls is being undertaken by Sarah Lloyd at the University of Huddersfield. Sarah has kindly agreed the use of some of her participant's discourses to assist this needs analysis:

*"You can't let yourself be in the situation where men are abusing you it's not right for them to be doing that"*

*"Massive risk taking behaviour but children who are vulnerable are prepared to take that risk if it means a bit of affection"*

*"Some of the young people that I work with are that desperate for attention you know they, they lavish it up instead of stopping and thinking..."*

Many of the comments included in this report reflect the need to develop a more critical approach to thinking about the sexual abuse of children. Positively, the signs of what constitutes child sexual exploitation are understood by most participants. However, meaningful identification for individual victims becomes more problematic as it is enmeshed with our individual judgements within broader societal discourses. There is a need to understand and communicate the complex power dynamics that exist within abuse relationships. This will require diverse yet comprehensive education and training programmes which challenge these perspectives at individual, group, community and societal levels. For these to be effective we need to recognise the starting point for each group and also plan for any preparatory engagement work that needs to be achieved.

### **Views of elders in the Asian community**

One of the challenges faced by this needs analysis was how to engage adult men from all communities. Although patient, yet persistent efforts were made few have added their views. However, it is important to understand the reasons why they have not engaged. We are able to contribute to that understanding here by the inclusion of information shared by both men, women and children from the Asian community.

This report has already alluded to the racial tensions in Rotherham after the concerns about CSE became widely publicised. Although, not specified as a reason for non-engagement we need to remain mindful of its implicit presence. It was reported that the Elders in the community did not consent to the completion of the online questionnaire and expressed the view that they thought the questions being asked were inappropriate. There was pride expressed in being a British Muslim and an assertion that they know right from wrong.

In addition, Elders expressed the view that those in charge, be they the police or RMBC had led a culture of repetitive failures that had let down both victims and the community at large:

*"So where is the sense of community or ownership, all the good work comes to an end if the police and children's services don't interact with the community with their concerns."*

There was a view that additional harm to those with sensitivities were yet to be identified. The Elders assert that people need to do their jobs and address the real issues. Further explanation was provided that the mechanism was not in place to protect the victims. An example regarding a stray dog was given:

*"you make one call and a van turns up, in the interests of public safety the dog is removed" so why haven't our children been heard or listened to."*

### **Contemplating cultural change: Generational divides**

One Asian male participant agreed to an individual interview. Some of his reported comments reflect a male dominated culture in which women's voices and position in community spaces are not always encouraged. However, such patriarchal views are endemic to all cultures thus making judgements without space for negotiation limits the potential for progress. This man, who will remain anonymous, should be commended as he willingly explored some of these challenging concepts. This participant was clear that children who are sexually exploited are innocent and that the perpetrators are committing a criminal act which is not condoned by Islamic guidance. He usefully explored some of the potential perspectives from Asian men. In doing so, he was not attempting to make excuses for the behaviours of those who perpetrate CSE but to try to understand why some men commit this crime.

He spoke of the cultural constraints placed on both genders which can lead to isolation. More specifically he spoke of young men being forced into marriages that left them feeling unsatisfied. He reflected that although he used to think of these as individual cases, he now contemplated this as a cultural issue where men can be blackmailed into marrying their first cousin. The participant felt that a collective inter-cultural response was required.

Other reflections made by the participant included the amount of free time that he felt young men had. He suggests that mosques and other institutions could do more to 'harness the talents' of these young men and occupy time that might otherwise spend 'hanging around on corners, targeting women'. The participant felt that this group of men were disenfranchised and that there was a need for community centres to foster collaboration.

The issue of generational divisions within the Asian community was raised by this participant and within the women's and young people's focus groups. The male participant felt there was a lack of leadership within the community, affected by a lack of 'chemistry' between the Elders and younger generation. He explained that there are no discussions about sexuality and suggests

mosques have a responsibility to engage with the issues that affect young people (men):

*"The Imam is not equipped to deal with these issues, his rhetoric doesn't resonate with the young people at all, so the young people feel pretty trapped, they can't communicate their frustrations with anyone".*

The topic of generational difference also arose within the Asian young people's focus groups. These children felt that older people across cultures found it more difficult to change their opinions and attitudes:

*"Once you get older, you want to stick to it...It's harder to change parents...you can't change what you've been brought up with, it easier for children".*

A group of young Asian men also took part in a focus group. They demonstrated an understanding of the complexity of sexual abuse and exploitation. They described their shock of what had been revealed in Rotherham:

*"What's happening in our town, we were shocked by it, it didn't cross any of our minds"*

The group was clear that they condemn the criminal behaviour of those who sexually abuse children. However, their personal experience after the media coverage was feeling that despite their own innocence they were having to defend themselves. They reflect that innocent victims of sexual abuse also had to defend their selves, to the press and others.

Interestingly, although they felt aggrieved by the actions of the EDL, this group did not experience the same racial tensions reported by younger participants. They expressed a pride in Rotherham and a desire to contribute to community cohesion in order to protect children.

### **Role of parents**

Asian children felt their parents were a source of reason and explanation. However, they also expressed the view that parents had gaps in their own knowledge which left children looking elsewhere for guidance. This prompted a discussion about parents also having somewhere to turn to seek advice. In exploring this issue the young people contemplated the function of parents in setting out boundaries of what as children they should not do. However, they felt that approach did not suit the boundary testing behaviour that teenagers engage with:

*"Parents will pressure their children a lot by saying don't do this, don't do this... but teenagers especially will do anything to go against their parents. So if like your parents say don't get into a relationship with someone because they are too old. That will make a teenager want to do it more. I think it's about parents being open with their children and saying this is why you shouldn't do it and this is why it's wrong rather than pressurising them without giving reasons."*

The role of parental supervision was an issue raised across the data. In the Roma community most respondents felt that victims of CSE were being let down by irresponsible parents who did not effectively, supervise, discipline or educate their children. However, the narrative below also reflects that parenting in this regard is the responsibility of mothers:

*"First is the situation at home. Children should be disciplined from a young age. Mums should be checking children's phone and computer and set a home time. So she knows where her child is."*

The role of mothers is dominant throughout each community's contribution to the needs analysis. Indeed most participants interviewed were women. Who despite societal marginalisation and personal discrimination were predominantly the people who were reporting CSE and supporting their children after the event. Importantly, through this process, they have also had to and indeed continue to, battle with professional organisations to access support and justice while simultaneously managing continuous threats from the men who abused their children. Hearing their accounts is fundamental to understanding the resistance they have experienced and the hope that many, but not all, have in RMBC's potential to meet their needs.

One Roma mother who took part in the study had direct experience of CSE. As a mother of a child who had recently been abused, she explained how criminal gangs would victimise the Roma girls who had been exploited, and attempt to bribe them so that they would not press charges:

*"I have experienced CSE. It happened to my daughter. When I found out what happened, I knew what to do. I went to the police and social services and I have reported it. Now I am watched by [the paedophile gang]. One of the [perpetrators] was deported, but the case was reopened because my daughter saw [him]. He was hanging around the school and Eastwood. He was verbally abusive to my daughter. She was so scared. The police found him after we reported him and he was sent to jail. But he sent 2 guys to visit us trying to bribe me daughter and to say that the guy is innocent. But my daughter refused to do that. She said "Mum he has destroyed my life....how could I let it go?" We all have suffered from this."*

Another British women who was a survivor of CSE also spoke about her abuser's disregard for police and parental authority:

*"I think he just completely thought he was above the law, he did what he wanted, he weren't scared of anyone, I mean I even saw him in fights with police officers, he knocked one police officer out. Because he asked him not to park where he'd parked. He was completely above the law, there were times when he would break into my mum and dad's house and rape me while my mum and dad were asleep in the next bedroom."*

Two White British mothers who had children that had been sexually exploited, spoke about how they educate their young adult sons to encourage them to be mindful of their behaviour in relationships. In particular navigating what an acceptable age difference between teenagers proved stressful:

*"You see it's affected us because my son rarely has girlfriends, he's 19 now and he's started seeing a girl of 17... And I couldn't help but give him a hard time....He was 18 when he started seeing her and she was 16. And I was like what are you doing, please don't do anything, just be respectful. He is really respectful but my concerns were when he got to 19 and she wasn't quite 17 and I said, oh you are going to have to end this relationship, even though he's so good, so well mannered, so respectful. But he was older than her and she was only kind of 16."*

One mother spoke about the extreme violence of one abuser which included hitting someone over the head with a hammer and how she felt the justice system was failing victims:

*"He's still walking about, the police are arresting him, it goes to court and that's where it fails and then the judge, I don't know they say the prisons are overcrowded and stuff but if you didn't pay your council tax then they would put you in prison"*.

There was a strong sentiment that a new approach was required in how the law responds to the needs of victims and perpetrators. One mother and her children had to leave Rotherham because their lives were at risk from the abuser and his associates. They felt that it was the offenders who should have to leave not the victims:

*"Make them leave Rotherham, I know it passes it onto somewhere else but it might make it more difficult for them to set up their little..."*

One survivor has needed to move home several times when the safety of herself and children was at risk:

*"The amount of times I've had to move is ridiculous, I've moved over 20 times. He's moved once because he got shot, that were it."*

The impact of these stressors and the necessity to continue to care for their children is reflected by these mothers:

*"It's like sleepless nights, and if you're not sleeping that night you know you wake up and feel like you can't function properly. You know we've all got kids and the kids suffer as well".*

*"I don't feel, like this past year, that I've been myself at all. I feel like I'm just observing."*

This group of mothers went on to talk about how it affects other aspects of their health such as over and under eating. They shared experience of parents they knew who coped with their children's CSE by misusing alcohol or drugs. Despite being faced with a myriad of challenges, these mothers experienced great difficulties in accessing support. One mother who was victimised as a child and adult wanted to protect her son from her abusers:

*"For years since he was about five I was asking for help. I wanted to put prevention in, because I knew what route it were going down. And they wouldn't do it and it kind of got left until, we were at crisis point."*

Prevention, for this mother, would have included therapy for her son and herself. She described going to seek help from professionals making it clear that she was considering suicide as her only option:

*"But they still didn't want to know they said, don't be stupid as if you're going to do that. One woman picked up the phone and said, I'm ringing social services and I thought, oh thank God, um and basically she turned around and said it wasn't because of that it was because I'd said it in front of my kids".*

## **Shame**

The issue of shame has been highlighted throughout this report. Although feelings of shame are cross cultural, how shame is experienced is also influenced by particular social norms (Wong et al., 2014). It is important that the issue of shame is not underestimated. For the Roma community, it can have a deep and lasting effect on children and families, including their ability to feel respected and welcome within their own community. This is of crucial importance as the Roma people are subject to stigmatisation across Europe (Pantea, 2014). As such, they counter public discourses of shame on a daily basis. In her study, of young people engaged in higher education Pantea found that there was a gender difference with Roma girls being under more pressure to 'out' themselves as Roma. The complexities of these issues require further understanding for the Roma population in Rotherham if integration with the broader community is to occur; while maintaining and protecting pride in one's identity and minimising the 'othering' that difference can instil.

Emerging from a different cultural heritage shame or 'sharam' within South Asian communities is a dominant culturally constructed phenomenon that inhibits the disclosure of child sexual abuse. Participants in the needs analysis explained that the lack of reporting permits members of the community to assert that CSA does not occur. Asian women explained that in particular, Asian male perpetrators would target girls who will always be loyal to their family's honour, which could increase if their family had particular standing in the community. Thus, any strategy to reduce CSE within this community also has to have regard for the lack of reporting of familial CSA.

## CSE NEEDS ANALYSIS

The women interviewed in the study spoke of women's groups that were established over the last 20 years, they gave accounts of the impact of CSA upon women they had supported, and one victim's experience was relayed:

*"She had no self-respect left, but important to her was her parents' social standing."*

They described how historically they now see that a 12 years old girl had been groomed by an Imam and as women have little influence in their community, male predators do not believe they will be challenged.



The use of shame within a restorative justice programme for sexual offenders was explored by McAkinden (2005). This complex topic needs further exploration beyond the remit of this report. However, in the case of CSE one participant commented that historically people who sexually abused children might be fearful of community retribution, but that the men who have been identified as perpetrating CSE in Rotherham have presented as powerful and untouchable.

The last note on shame which needs to be mentioned is that of the many workers who have dedicated their careers to supporting vulnerable women and children. They now find themselves looking back to re-evaluate events with the new knowledge available about defining CSE. They describe a sense of shame and soul searching as they reflect on the abuse experienced by the women. Similarly, RMBC has been publicly shamed in its historic failure to protect its children. Indeed for the victims themselves, there can be a latter realisation of the true nature of their experiences which delays shame.

The message from all of these accounts is that we cannot allow the fear of shame to silence any individual, family or organisation.

## THEME 3: COLLECTIVE COHESION

This last theme develops some of the issues previously raised. It considers how RMBC can work collectively with other agencies and the public to renew their CSE strategy. It is important to interrogate both the past and current difficulties if there is to be an inclusive strategic solution. However, there are multiple challenges to achieving and maintaining an effective strategy. Some of those are within and between professional organisations; others are within and between different communities. These issues are further complicated when the two collide and professional difficulties exacerbate and place at risk the needs of the community. Rotherham's failures regarding CSE have been widely publicised, this has placed it under the public spotlight. Although that will contribute to the pressure that everyone in the town will be experiencing, this needs analysis has found multiple sources of knowledge, skills, strength and pride upon which Rotherham can renew.

### ***Challenges to cohesion***

Much has been written about the Risky Business Project (RBP) a youth based service whose engagement with young people began to identify concerns about their vulnerability to sexual exploitation. This report will not repeat the history which is detailed within Professor Jay's report. However, it was a topic raised during the needs analysis and based on that data the following can be shared. Some of the participants who previously worked for the RBP were anxious about being interviewed as part of this needs analysis. They sought extra reassurance that their contributions would be anonymous. They report feeling reassured that a university was overseeing the research. We were advised that the fear of violent reprisals were not only experienced by victims but also the staff working on the RBP.

Despite the immense pressure they were experiencing, staff from RBP felt that being youth workers instead of qualified social workers led them to being heavily criticised. Their expression of feeling isolated while living in fear and being unheard, mirrors that of the victims of CSE. While some suggest future plans should include the reinvention of the RBP, others assert the need for an integrated response which is careful not to encourage division.

Inter-professional concerns were highlighted by RBP staff and Asian women working with the BME community. One previous RBP staff member expressed concern that Asian led organisations such as Apna Haq, were reluctant to accept the assertion that Asian men were primarily responsible for CSE in Rotherham. Broader concerns were raised about information of vulnerable Asian women being leaked back into the community. Equally, Asian women working with the BME community felt they had been oppressed by White managers when they had previously raised their concerns about vulnerable girls in the community. BME workers felt that they were viewed as the oppressors and that their concerns about the children were assumed to be due to conservative religious views.

The experience of BME practitioners feeling silenced and misunderstood across cultures is also reflective of the Asian children and women they advocate for and protect. It is essential that dialogue is encouraged across practitioner groups to explore these issues. Positively the data collected demonstrates that all of these women are aware of the risk of CSE and its gendered foundations. Equally, there was a shared rhetoric that there needs to be a strategy to encourage the whole Asian population to openly recognise and accept that it occurs and that they each have a role to play in protecting children.

The Elders of the Asian community were unanimous in their criticism of the CSE revelations in Rotherham. They assert that if CSE had been a *'one off and unique event'* then they would understand, but the length of time and the number of victims was in their view *"unforgivable"* and led them to ask:

*"What type of community cohesion is this, criminals are left to continue without fear?"*

Despite the efforts made during this study, there is an absence of male voices in the data collected. Therefore, a current determination of needs is based only upon the views that were expressed. However, the absence of some populations from the study suggests there is a further need to explore ways, which encourage others to contribute to our understanding.

In their outreach summary Apna Haq note that commissioners have spoken directly with the mosque Elders. The women BME practitioners expressed concern about the absence of women's representation in the mosque and therefore in discussions with the Council. The sole Asian male who agreed to an interview, reports that Asian women have been deprived from joining the mosque and side-lined within their community. He described the more progressive models in America where the needs and rights of women were visibly catered for. He made reference to a current discussion about women only mosques, which he felt was a natural outcome for women:

*"Being deprived of their God given right of going to the mosque".*

He asserts Islam is not gendered and that there is a need for women to be in positions of leadership within their community.

### **Reducing division**

Contact theory (Allport, 1954) argues that bringing diverse groups of people together can promote tolerance and acceptance. However, success of the model is dependent upon multiple conditions which include, equal group status, common goals, intergroup cooperation and the support of a recognised authority. This model has been applied to reducing prejudice between groups in Northern Ireland (Brocklehurst 2006;

Hughes, 2010). In her exploration of what factors make a difference to the success or not of contact theory in Northern Ireland, Hughes (2014) noted the efforts of three schools whose pupils were from different faith backgrounds to host inter-group events. The teachers worked hard to draw together members of the community such as politicians, religious leaders and parents to encourage them to participate in the process.

It could be argued that tackling CSE is a common goal for Rotherham. Although, there is a need to recognise the multi-faceted nature of child sexual abuse and indeed of CSE. We should not feel confident that the elements of CSE that have been visible via the abuse and domestic trafficking of young girls is the only form of CSE in Rotherham or elsewhere.

Moving beyond 'them' and 'us' discourses is vital for successful inter-group formations. Hughes (2014) suggests that 'reaching out' where compromises are made by individuals for the benefit of the greater good are essential to the creation of permeable boundaries. RMBC have an opportunity to support an integrated model that values contributions from community, voluntary and statutory sectors to form a cohesive response to CSE. However, each sector has to be integrated throughout the process if divisions are to be reduced.

In creating an inclusive solution, it is vital that RMBC also model integrated practices of its own which will support others to do the same. To support equality each sector and organisation should be encouraged to participate fully in the CSE strategy. In our data, the importance of localised community knowledge was apparent. Some teachers suggested that there were benefits to housing working closely with them to understand the community dynamics for successful integration of new families; as opposed to viewing the meeting of need by virtue of property vacancy alone. Some schools were also hubs of community support where parents could seek advice and the use of a telephone to address issues of debt and other sources of familial crisis. This source of community support demonstrates the effectiveness of a dynamic and needs led preventative approach; where community support is readily available to families as and when required.

Such a degree of flexibility should be encouraged by all agencies, as one participant described it:

*"We need a humankind approach".*

This may seem to be a challenge, particularly in neoliberal times. Thus, an understanding of the relationship between policy and its lived manifestation for practitioners and the public is crucial to a successful strategy that strengthens communities. A review, which explores these dynamics and the subsequent effects upon services, would help counter divisions that previously occurred between the RBP and the council. Thus, any co-ordination of an integrated system would benefit from an objective view of wider dynamics and creating space for these to be reflected upon. We suggest a reviewing process, which understands organisational behaviours, would support RMBC and beyond to comprehend the permeable transference of CSE as it affects individual and group behaviour.

### **Education**

The data reveals the need for an extensive and varied range of educational materials which need to be constantly accessible to the whole of the community. These should also be available in audio and pictorial form. In addition, they should reflect different languages and cultures to meet the needs of the whole Rotherham community. It is vital that educational materials move beyond raising awareness to educate the population on how to act to protect.

Throughout the analysis the need educate ourselves to understand what is CSE and how it can be recognised was a constant theme. Contributions from participants considered the complexity of how to educate beyond the initial identification of possible signs to develop a mature, dynamic and reliable response. Part of any renewal strategy has to be meaningful education and community integration.

Another way information could be shared in an interactive form is via the use of drama. This has the potential to engage people in critical discussion beyond the scope of the play or programme they have watched. One such example was showcased during an event hosted by RR during this analysis period. Denny Smith, Curriculum Leader of performing Arts at Rotherham College of Arts and Technology and a group of drama students presented a play, which depicted domestic violence between young couples.

They demonstrated how this could be adapted as a learning pedagogy for schools. The potential audiences for this mode of learning extend beyond schools; in addition, it provides an opportunity to contemplate further collaboration between RMBC and local schools, colleges and businesses to develop materials, applications and games that will be attractive and accessible to young people.

The young Asian students also suggest teachers have a role to play in their personal and social education and to recognise the significant racial divides that currently exist in engaging pupils with these subjects.

*"I think teachers are too scared to come on subjects like that because they know that one community might have really strong opinions about this and another community might have really strong opinions about this and they don't really want to have to deal with that. So they just avoid it."*

### **Schools as education hubs**

The role of schools in the education of children and parents about CSE was raised by multiple participants. Both educators and members of the public expressed the view that schools had a crucial role to play. Although there was some variance in what age CSE education should start, most were of the view that it should begin in primary school. Some participants spoke of ongoing work they conducted with pupils to explain about safe and unsafe touching.

Some schools were creative in the methods used to engage children with information on Childline via its incorporation in an art project. All agreed that CSE education had to form part of the curriculum so it was reliably provided and repeated each year.

One school had hosted a CSE awareness day for parents. However, no-one attended. They were surprised at this as other events were supported by parents. Some reflect that although some parents do not engage with schools, because of their own personal experiences, it was likely to be the topic that failed to entice them.

Several participants suggest that introducing CSE within other activities such as cooking or manicures could be more useful. One participant commented that women who were oppressed were more likely to be able to attend a cooking event in a community setting rather than one labelled CSE.

In the preparation of any education events it is important to be mindful that the exploration and realisation of the sexual abuse of children is a challenging topic. In addition, given the prolific nature of sexual abuse it is probable that some people in attendance will have experienced sexual abuse. Thus, all events should have appropriate support networks signposted for attendees.

One signpost used in this needs analysis is the bespoke Rotherham sexual exploitation helpline run by the NSPCC. John Cameron, Head of NSPCC helpline, explains that the responses to the helpline launched in December 2014, have been relatively low with over 100 calls of which 33 referrals were made to the police and social services.

Although, there has been publicity about the helpline, many participants state that they would not know where to turn to for advice if they were concerned about a child being sexually exploited. Should RMBC wish to utilise the helpline as part of its strategy then it should think about wider publicity of this resource.

The responses to the study reflect that education has to extend beyond CSE, so that different agencies and communities can also learn about each other and create space for common goals. It is also appropriate for all agencies to receive training on child sexual abuse and exploitation. It is an issue that we

all need to become more familiar with. Equally, there are hard to reach populations, which may be due to age, gender and culture who could be resistant. Thus, creative means of engagement will need some investment.

The data from the analysis reflects the need to protect all children from sexual abuse. Part of any educational package has to define the multifaceted nature of child sexual abuse and to understand that it is always exploitative. If people are to recognise and then report the abuse of children it is essential that they are able to identify what is abuse and also to understand what is meant by a 'child'.

Respondents considered that children at risk of sexual abuse and exploitation could be as young as 6 months of age. The upper age of what constitutes a child at risk of CSE became more problematic with children reaching the age of adulthood at 18 and also now remaining in education until they are 18 years of age. This is increasingly difficult when children have 'special needs' such as a learning difficulty, which for some children aged 16 and over can make a judgement on their 'capacity' to give consent more difficult to determine.

### ***Educating online***

Young people are avid users of social media. In particular 77.1% of young people surveyed used Facebook and 66.7% used Snapchat on a daily basis. A fifth of all respondents admitted to using social media to talk with people they didn't know. 27 young people admitted sending an explicit picture of themselves online, whereas 43 had received an explicit picture from someone else. As is common in such surveys, young people perceived that their peers were more active in sending and receiving explicit images than is reportedly the case.

Although, there are risks to young people from online predators, it can also provide a means by which they can readily access information about keeping safe and reporting concerns. It would be useful to understand how young people in Rotherham may help develop and engage with an online safety protocol. Once developed such resources should be freely available.

**Prevention not intervention**

Understanding the dynamic nature of added vulnerabilities in the assessment of risk should form part of any education plan. In particular, the risk of what is unknown can be difficult to legislate for. However, this can be assisted by maintaining good community relations and reliance on the observations of the public and practitioners of all services. Further areas for prevention are detailed in Figure 2.



Figure 2 Allen (2015) Incremental scale of added vulnerabilities when assessing risk of CSE.

As the above scale suggests listening to the voice of the child is an important factor in our ability to protect children. Thus, the voice of the child and adult survivors should form an essential component of any education package:

*"I wish, I'd been listened to, they should have stopped it, they neglected children by not doing that, they failed, they failed in their job all the lot of them. They put me on a protection order, why they did that I never know because they just left me there. They classed my behaviour as naughty and threatened me with a secure order."*

The futility of the above statement of a child being left in a vulnerable situation or feeling threatened by the imposition of a Secure Order needs further interrogation. It highlights the conflict experienced by victims of CSE, the staff from the RBP and social workers in Rotherham. Each were experiencing the constraints of a system that was unable to adapt to their needs.

Thus, any education programme needs to ensure that children, adults, the public and professionals have clear pathways to preventing CSE. This includes educating the public that they will not be judged or blamed if they report concerns.

In addition to education that prevents CSE from occurring, there is a need to scaffold plans that help young people to exit CSE. This should support routes for all young people whether they have been recruited as victims, perpetrators or both. This will entail a review of current policies and legislation to consider whether they suitable for these victims.

Importantly, educating ourselves, perpetrators, police, the judiciary and government to ensure progressive steps are made to pursue and prosecute perpetrators is a vital component of any strategy.

Last but not least commissioners and policy makers need to understand the enduring impact of CSE on victims, survivors and their families. Recognising that they need to have access to long term mental health, advocacy and therapeutic services can be reflected in long term funding of resources:

*"Anxiety, depressive disorder, it's something that you learn how to deal with but not fully. My family, I mean my parents lost their jobs because I weren't going home and that some it's not just emotionally, it's financially as well."*

### Conclusion

This report has drawn on both qualitative and quantitative data to explore the needs of the people of Rotherham. In accordance with the research objectives, the data collected included a specific focus nature of child sexual abuse and exploitation as it affects the diversity of minority groups in Rotherham, particularly Roma/Slovak/Gypsy Traveller and Asian communities. It is apparent that an understanding of the true scale of abuse in our society will not be realised until measures are in place which make it safe for children to disclose. However, the contributions of men, women and children have enabled us to have an increased understanding of the particular barriers to disclosure and accessing support experienced by and within these minority communities. Investment is needed in order to develop changes in cultural practices.

Following a brief programme of public engagement and participatory research, this study has found a general lack of accurate public awareness. For some community members, denial and blame characterised their view of CSE victims, whilst others experienced social polarisation and community division. This study has shown that there are multiple challenges to achieving and maintaining an effective CSE strategy. Therefore, a collective approach,

which includes statutory and voluntary organisations, is crucial to effective community engagement.

Importantly, this report has also shown that over the past year some tensions have developed between the White British and Asian Pakistani populations. These divisions were particularly troubling for young people, and have the potential to undermine community cohesion. Our study also found some professionals do not feel equipped to raise issues of CSE within their communities. Thus, educational materials, which are designed with cultural relevance and are accessible to those with learning or other disabilities, are needed. Crucially, these resources need to be constantly accessible and culturally relevant. Materials should be available in audio and pictorial form in addition to different languages to meet the needs of the whole Rotherham community. It is vital that educational materials move beyond raising awareness to educate the population on how to act to protect.

Finally, in commissioning this study RMBC provided an opportunity for people to share their views. As a project team, we are humbled by the experiences that were shared. We know the effects of CSE last a lifetime, but many victims, survivors and their families also demonstrate extraordinary courage. There is much we can learn from everyone affected by CSE and those who support them. We hope this report assists everyone in Rotherham to reach beyond surviving and truly thrive.

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