

**Report of the Director of Adults and Health**

**Report to Executive Board**

**Date: 26 June 2019**

**Subject: The Visible Project**

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. The Visible Project is about meeting the needs of adults who have been sexually abused as children and:
  - Influences service providers at strategic, organisational and frontline levels
  - Impacts on strategy, policy and commissioning
  - Equips staff with awareness and confidence to develop competence in practice
  - Shares best practice and disseminates learning and national research.
2. The Visible Project has the following aims:
  - For frontline workers to be more confident and competent to meet the needs of people who have been sexually abused as children
  - Service providers have the knowledge, workforce and resources to meet the needs of people who have been sexually abused as children
  - To develop a City wide policy statement that includes acknowledgment of the impacts and consequences of child sexual abuse and the resultant needs
  - To work with commissioners to enable the commissioning of services that include the requirement to meet the needs of people who have been sexually abused as children.

3. The Visible Project is being independently evaluated by an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of York. To date, the evaluation shows significant progress made across the system led by the Strategic Steering Group chaired by Sinead Cregan, Commissioning Programme Leader. The membership of the group includes people with lived experience and representatives from Leeds City Council (LCC), Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust (LTHT), Leeds Community Healthcare Trust (LCHT), Leeds and York Partnership Foundation Trust (LYPFT), West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner's office (WYPCC) and the Third Sector.
4. The current work of the Visible Project includes:
  - Dissemination of a coproduced Policy Statement for Leeds organisations to adopt in relation to this agenda, and the development of a resource to support organisations to think through developing an action plan to implement and embed the policy
  - Launch of The Visible Project website June 2019 and associated publicity
  - Engage organisations to commit to Policy Statement sign up
  - Develop communications plan to support the launch of the Visible website (coordinate message with organisational communication leads).

## **Recommendations**

Executive Board members are asked to:

1. Adopt this policy statement (see the appendices Visible Policy Statement and Visible policy statement briefing) and commit to its implementation
2. Agree that the Director of Adults and Health in conjunction with the Chief Officer for Human Resources will establish a task and finish group to implement the Policy Statement (see Appendix 1 Visible Policy Statement) across the Council.

## 1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report and its appendices is to inform Executive Board of the impact of child sexual abuse and the positive work of the Visible Project to address the impact it can have on survivors – focused on improving the health and wellbeing outcomes of adult survivors of child sexual abuse, which is based within the Women’s Counselling and Therapy Service (WCTS).
- 1.2 To seek approval from Executive Board for the recommendations contained within the report.

## 2. Background information

- 2.1 The background to this report is the impact on individuals as a result of the child sexual abuse perpetrated by Jimmy Savile and others. In late 2012 reports surfaced indicating that Savile had committed sexual abuse throughout his 50 year career. By October 2012 allegations had been made to 13 British Police Forces and the Metropolitan Police Service launched a formal criminal investigation, Operation Yewtree, into historic allegations of child sexual abuse by Savile and other individuals over four decades.
- 2.2 The outcome of this investigation prompted the establishment of Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse to examine how the country’s institutions handled their duty of care to protect children from sexual abuse and to take testimony from the survivors.
- 2.3 The Inquiry heard that child sexual abuse can have wide-ranging and serious consequences. For some survivors these effects endure throughout adult life. Child sexual abuse can affect psychological and physical well-being, family and intimate relationships, faith and education and career. Survivors can be two to four times more likely to become victims of sexual, physical or emotional abuse again in their life time. Survivors have reported a range of mental health issues that are a result of the sexual abuse they suffered. The most common issues reported were depression (33%), lack of trust in authority (32%), thoughts of suicide (28%), self-harming (22%) and attempted suicide (22%).
- 2.4 In response to Jimmy Savile case, Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) funded a workshop in October 2015 on ‘Childhood Sexual Abuse - The Challenge for Mental Health Services – A conversation’ which was attended by 60+ practitioners and commissioners. People started to think about what they could positively do in response to such harm.

## 3. Main issues

- 3.1 The Visible Project was established as a result of the workshop – a system change project funded by Leeds CCG and a grant from the Lloyds Bank Foundation to WCTS. The work of Visible is informed by a lived experience Leadership Reference Group hosted by WCTS. The approach of the project has been genuinely ground-breaking with a shift from a medical model of distress to an approach that is restorative and trauma-informed in its practice: asking not “*what is the matter with you*” but “*what happened to you*”? What was also ground-breaking was the direct involvement of survivors right from the inception of the project. They were heavily involved in the co-design of the policy statement and the Visible Project web-site which was officially launched on 10 June 2019.

- 3.2 Leeds Visible Project partnership is about making the invisible visible, in order to improve health and well-being outcomes for adult survivors of child sexual abuse. It is also a pro-active approach that fits in with the Leeds philosophy of prevention and early intervention to stop an escalation into acute care.
- 3.3 The Visible Project
- Influences service providers at strategic, organisational and frontline levels
  - Impacts on strategy, policy and commissioning
  - Equips staff with awareness and confidence to develop competence in practice
  - Shares best practice and disseminates learning and national research.
- 3.4 The Visible Project has the following aims:
- For frontline workers to be more confident and competent to meet the needs of people who have been sexually abused as children
  - Service providers will have the knowledge, workforce and resources to meet the needs of people who have been sexually abused as children
  - To develop a City wide policy statement that includes acknowledgment of the impacts and consequences of child sexual abuse and the resultant needs
  - To work with commissioners to commission services that meet the needs of people who have been sexually abused as children.
- 3.5 Visible is being independently evaluated by an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of York. To date the evaluation shows significant progress made across the system led by Strategic Steering Group chaired by Sinead Cregan, Strategic Commissioning Manager. The membership of the group includes people with lived experience and representatives from LCC, LTHT, LCHT, LYPFT, WY PCC and the third sector.
- 3.6 The current work of the Visible Project includes:
- Dissemination of a coproduced Policy Statement for Leeds organisations to adopt in relation to this agenda. Plus a resource to support organisations to think through developing an action plan to implement and embed the Policy
  - Launch of The Visible Project website June 2019 and associated publicity
  - Engage organisations to commit to Policy Statement sign up
  - Develop communications plan to support the launch of the Visible website
- 3.7 The Visible Project is a catalyst for system change across Leeds, with adult survivors being influential in all aspects of delivering improvements. Visible aims to support improvements in the service response to adults who have experienced child sexual abuse and to support statutory bodies in developing relevant policies and best practices.
- 3.8 The work of the Visible project was recently highlighted in an Observer newspaper article on 9 June by respected journalist Yvonne Roberts – very much set in the context of Leeds as a compassionate city.
- 3.9 *Future of The Visible Project*
- The project will:
- Continue the work, particularly around the policy statement using the one year funding of £40,000 from May 2019 to April 2020 from Lloyds Bank Foundation and Leeds CCG.

- Maintain momentum and to capitalise on emerging action, embed and broaden influence, deepen engagement.
- Support city wide organisations to develop action plans to implement the Policy Statement into procedures and practice, working towards a city-wide requirement to adopt the Statement and develop action plans within service specifications
- Respond to the national Police interest to support engagement and adoption of the policy statement at a senior strategic level.

- 3.10 WCTS have recently been informed that their application to the Secretary of State for Justice has been successful and he has agreed to offer a grant of £277,200 over three years to Women's Counselling and Therapy Service as a contribution towards the provision of support for female and/or male victims of rape and sexual abuse, including child sexual abuse (where applicable). This application was directly linked to the work of the Visible Project.
- 3.11 WCTS plan to submit a funding application to the Big Lottery (Spring/Summer 2019) to support a further 3 to 5 years' work for up to £300-500k. This would complement the grant received from the Ministry of Justice.
- 3.12 The steering and lived experience reference groups will continue to meet bimonthly to oversee the continued work of Visible.

#### **4. Corporate considerations**

##### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 The Policy Statement was developed with people with lived experience as was the content of the Visible website.
- 4.1.2 The lived experience reference group will continue to meet and be supported by WCTS.

##### **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 4.2.1 An EIA screening tool has been completed.

##### **4.3 Council policies, best council plan**

- 4.3.1 The Visible project is contributing to the delivery of the Health and Well-being priority in the Best Council Plan 2018/19 to 2020/21, specifically to improve the quality of life for people and particularly those who are vulnerable.
- 4.3.2 The Visible Project also makes significant contributions to the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It also supports the Leeds Health and Care Plan and its priority to maximise people's recovery.

##### **4.3.3 Climate Emergency**

- 4.3.4 As this report relates to the adoption of a policy statement there will be no impact on carbon emissions.

##### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

- 4.4.1 There have been no financial implications or contributions from the Council to the work of Visible.
- 4.4.2 WCTS is commissioned by Adults and Health and their current contract ends on the 30 September 2020. They did not approach commissioners for extra funding but rather asked for support from officers in taking this work forward which we have done with one of our officers chairing the strategic Steering Group of cross city partners.

#### **4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in**

- 4.5.1 There are no specific legal implications.

#### **4.6 Risk management**

- 4.6.1 There is a risk that services that are delivered across the city will lack sensitivity to people who have had adverse childhood experiences. This policy statement seeks to ensure that services are mindful of and meet these needs.
- 4.6.2 This work helps mitigate the corporate risks identified as Children's and Adults Safeguarding.

### **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 The 2012 high profile Savile case brought the issue of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) to national awareness. The subsequent and ongoing high profile cases plus the establishment and work of the Independent Inquiry into CSA and the Centre of Expertise on CSA have ensured the issue remains high in public and organisational awareness.
- 5.2 Our deepening knowledge of the impacts and consequences of CSA (as an Adverse Childhood Experience or complex / developmental trauma) helps health and social care organisations' understanding of the difficulties and complexities some adults face. The emerging field of 'trauma-informed care' is leading to the design and development of services that are responding more effectively to adults with histories of CSA.
- 5.3 Responding to this new 'explosion' of awareness is challenging. Many find the prevalence figures of CSA shocking and find them hard to accept. The challenges of responding well to adults start with the complexities around 'just' providing opportunity for people to disclose or include their experience in conversations about their needs. For example, some staff are reticent to routinely ask about trauma or violence, feeling ill equipped to respond to disclosures.
- 5.4 The Truth Project Independent Inquiry Child Sexual Abuse has heard from 1000 people and 520 accounts have been analysed so far. This work is summarised in the Infographic attached to this report (see Appendix 3: The Truth Project Independent Inquiry Child Sexual Abuse Infographic). The attached table extract from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse report (see Appendix 4: Table extract from Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse report – the impacts of child sexual abuse) demonstrates the impact of child sexual abuse on individuals.
- 5.5 Visible's current work is now focused on supporting organisations to start to include this issue in their strategic considerations through the tool of a template Policy Statement. Visible's approach recognises that the way forward for each

organisation or agency is unique. Visible supports the autonomy of organisations to decide how to implement the Policy Statement and provides resources to support those considerations.

- 5.6 Leeds City Council has been involved in this work from the outset and if the local authority adopts the Policy Statement and starts to identify (possibly small) actions, this will set a good example and demonstrate leadership across the city. It will also demonstrate the willingness of the city to not avoid the history of Savile and to take responsibility for being part of the work needed to address this issue in our society.

## **6 Recommendations**

Executive Board members are asked to:

- 6.1 Adopt this policy statement (see the appendices Visible Policy Statement and Visible policy statement briefing) and commit to its implementation
- 6.2 Agree that the Director of Adults and Health in conjunction with the Chief Officer for Human Resources will establish a task and finish group to implement the Policy Statement (see Appendix 1 Visible Policy Statement) across the Council.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 7.1 None

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Visible Policy Statement

Appendix 2 Visible Policy Statement briefing

Appendix 3 The Truth Project Independent Inquiry Child Sexual Abuse Infographic

Appendix 4 Table extract from Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse report – the impacts of child sexual abuse

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.