



MTCBC Transformation Programme

**MTCBC Review – Lessons Learned from
the Casey Report**

**Task and Finish Group
Terms of Reference**

February 2015

Background

In September 2014, the Secretary of State appointed Louise Casey CB to carry out an inspection of the compliance of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) with the requirements of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1999, in relation to the Council's exercise of its functions on governance, children and young people and taxi and private hire licensing.

This followed an Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (Professor Alexis Jay), commissioned by RMBC which found that there was a 'collective failure' by both the Council and the police to stop the abuse.

The Casey Report identified that RMBC is not fit for purpose and that it is failing in its duties to protect vulnerable children and young people from harm. In particular, the investigations identified:

- A Council in denial about safeguarding failures
- An archaic culture of sexism, bullying and discomfort about race
- Failure to address past weaknesses
- Weak and ineffective arrangements for taxi licensing
- Ineffective leadership and management, including political leadership
- No shared vision, a partial management team and ineffective liaisons with partners
- A culture of covering up uncomfortable truths, silencing whistle-blowers and paying off staff rather than dealing with difficult issues

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's Transformation Group has been directed by the Chief Executive and the Interim Director for Social Services to consider the findings of the Casey Report and to ensure that the necessary actions are implemented to address any lessons learned from the findings of this report.

A Task and Finish Group will be set up to undertake this piece of work.

Aim of the Task and Finish Group

The overall aim of the Task and Finish Group is to establish whether MTCBC is in the best position to respond if a similar occurrence to Rotherham happened in Merthyr Tydfil and, if not, identify the actions that need to be carried out to ensure that this is the case.

Key Themes

The Casey Report identified a whole raft of issues and failures that took place in Rotherham which has prevented the Council from meeting its legal obligation to secure continuous improvement in the way in which it exercises its functions.

The key themes for consideration by the MTCBC Task and Finish Group are as follows:

1. **Child Sexual Exploitation** – including:
 - a. Existing policies, procedures and assessment/identification tools
 - b. Scale of the problem locally
 - c. Attitudes towards CSE
 - d. Prevention
 - e. Performance Monitoring
 - f. Training
2. **Licensing** – including:
 - a. Current procedures for applications and renewals of taxi licences
 - b. Appropriateness of policies
 - c. Outcome of complaints and/or investigations
 - d. Knowledge of CSE
 - e. Home to School transport (MTCBC)
3. **Culture** – issues from Rotherham included:
 - a. A Council in denial
 - b. Covering up information and silencing whistle blowers
 - c. Sexism, bullying and racism
 - d. Addressing gross misconduct
 - e. Political correctness
 - f. Failure to address past weaknesses
 - g. Overly concerned with reputation
4. **Governance** – including:
 - a. The effectiveness of leadership and management

- b. Scrutiny and challenge
- c. Council vision
- d. Members standards
- e. Information Sharing
- f. Liaisons with other agencies

Membership of the Task and Finish Group

The suggested membership of the Group is as follows:

Ellis Cooper (Chair)

Councillor Brendan Toomey (Leader of the Council)

Councillor Brent Carter (Portfolio Member for Social Services)

Nicola Kingham (Project Manager)

Annabel Lloyd – Safeguarding (Children and Adults)

Lisa Curtis Jones/Phil Hodgson – Children’s Services Lead

Steve Peters/Paul Lewis – Licensing

Richard Parry – Culture

Gary Thomas – Transformation

Ceri Dinham – Corporate Communications

Simon Jones – Legal

The following co-opted members will form part of the overall work programme:

Mark Thomas/Suzanne Davies – Partnership Team

Ewan McWilliams – Performance Management

Lisa Jones – HR

Chris Hole – Youth Service

Kerry O’Donovan – Equalities and Diversity

Education representative

Meetings and Governance

It is proposed that, initially, the Task and Finish Group meets fortnightly to develop the work programme and thereafter, on a monthly basis to monitor progress against actions.

Monthly highlight reports will be presented to the Council's Transformation Steering Group and these will be escalated to the Transformation Board on request.

An initial report, setting out the proposed work programme will be presented to Cabinet in April 2015.

Related Documents:

Title	Author	Date
A report on the quality of local authority education services for children and young people in Pembrokeshire County Council	Estyn	June 2011
Joint inspectorates' review of inter-agency arrangements and practice to safeguard and protect children in Pembrokeshire	CSSIW	November 2011
Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham	Professor Alexis Jay	August 2014
Report to Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board	Rotherham Task and Finish Group	December 2014
Cabinet Information Report on Safeguarding in Merthyr Tydfil	Annabel Lloyd	January 2015
Report of Inspection of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	Louise Casey CB	February 2015