

# Joint Serious Case Review

Concerning Sexual Exploitation of Children and  
Adults with Needs for Care and Support in  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne



# Introduction



- Commenced in 2015 when there was increased awareness of the prevalence of sexual exploitation that had been occurring in the Newcastle area.
- Undertaken by Lead Reviewer David Spicer with an Independent Review Team with experience in a variety of areas
- Includes a number of both local and national recommendations
- Published February 2018

# Scope



- Not possible to consider all cases, need for proportionality
- 8 cases selected mixture of children and adults
- Thematic report, looking at patterns and themes that can be applied to all cases
- First review of its kind nationally
- Involvement of victims, professionals and key individuals

# Background



- Prevalence not fully understood prior to 2014
- Victim disclosures to police – catalyst for Operation Sanctuary
- Operation Sanctuary commenced January 2014, strategic buy in from across agencies
- Joint Serious Case Review commissioned October 2015

# What changed in 2014?



***“I started seeing younger girls there being raped and not realising it. School girls in uniform with their school bags coming from school.”***

# Why was it so hidden?



***“I didn’t think what was happening was wrong. I thought they were my friends. They bought me drink and drugs. I thought it was ok because of my family.”***

***“Then it became more sinister. Different. There were parties with men a lot older. 30/40, when previously 20/21.”***

***“I pushed the help away. I knew professionals were trying to see me and I cancelled appointments.”***

***“I was really scared –.... their family members were sending threats. I was frightened of being killed. I had seen rapes and was too terrified to say anything.”***

***“They are very skilled at who they target.”***

# They target vulnerability



*“I had a horrific time at school. I was bullied. I had no help with it. I have had mental illness since I was 11 or 12. Severe depression. If this hadn’t happened I don’t think the exploitation would have happened.”*

*“I suffered a significant early bereavement. I was really down and started drinking a lot of alcohol from when I was 14 years old”.*

*“In the Park, I met R. I was in year 8. He was asking my age and about school and why I was out so late. He took us to his house. There were a huge number of people there ... R. asked me for my number to keep in touch and that was the start of the problem.”*

Not fully understood (prior to 2014)

Need for multi-agency co-located teams

Transition

Long term support for victims

In Newcastle, decisions about taking action were not influenced by lack of concern or interest, misplaced fears about political correctness or fear of being seen as racist.

Criminal trial can be damaging

Impact on ability to form trusting relationships and parent children

Vulnerability not age

Need to disrupt perpetrators

Trauma informed approach

Specialist Advice

Victim Focussed

Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board  
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No evidence of lack of action or fear of racism

Committed and Determined

Independent Review Author – David Spicer  
February 2018

Need for review of adults legislation

Need to develop perpetrator profile

Effective safeguarding is a collective responsibility and requires a culture of robust interagency and professional challenge of practice and strategy.

Appropriate accommodation

Prevention depends on awareness and reporting



# What would make a difference?



*“If I had had someone to talk to it might have made a difference. I used to tell them to f-off – but they shouldn’t give up.”*

*“I should have been taken away from my family before I was born. For neglect. It took until I was 14 years old.”*

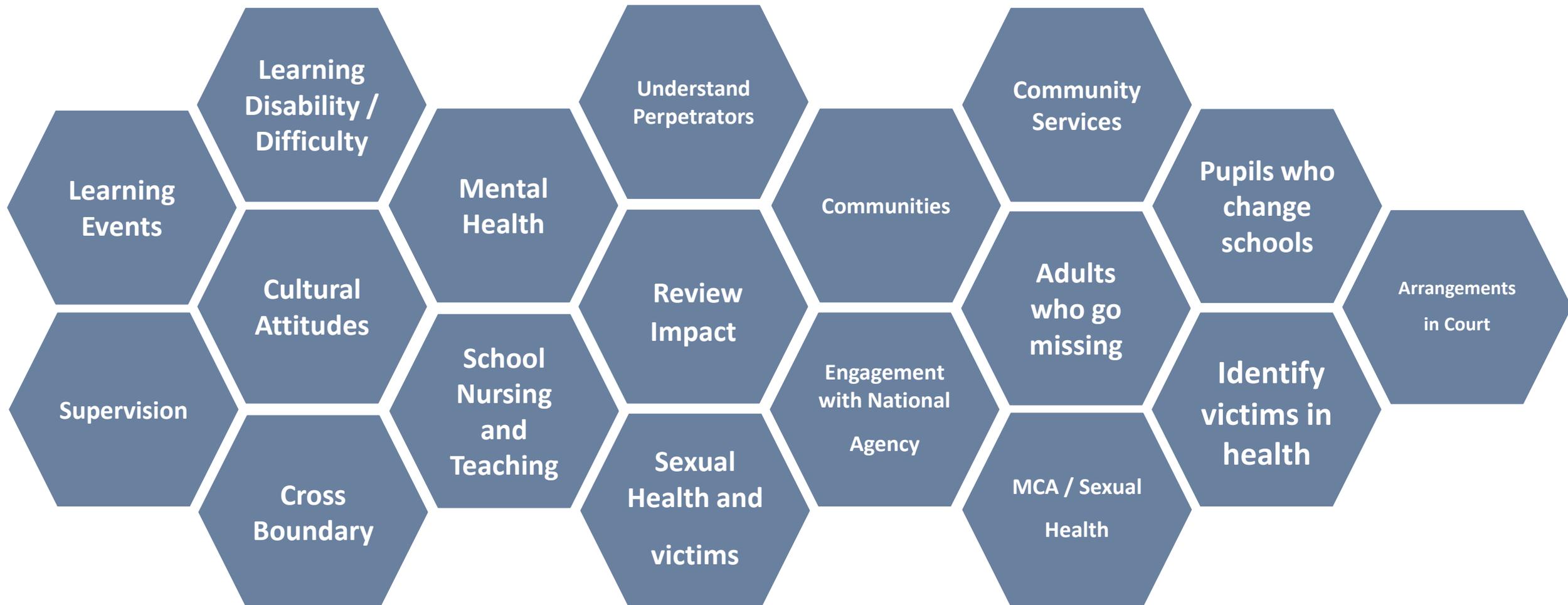
*“Trust is a real issue. I didn’t trust anyone at first. I needed one person for me not a big team.”*

# Summary

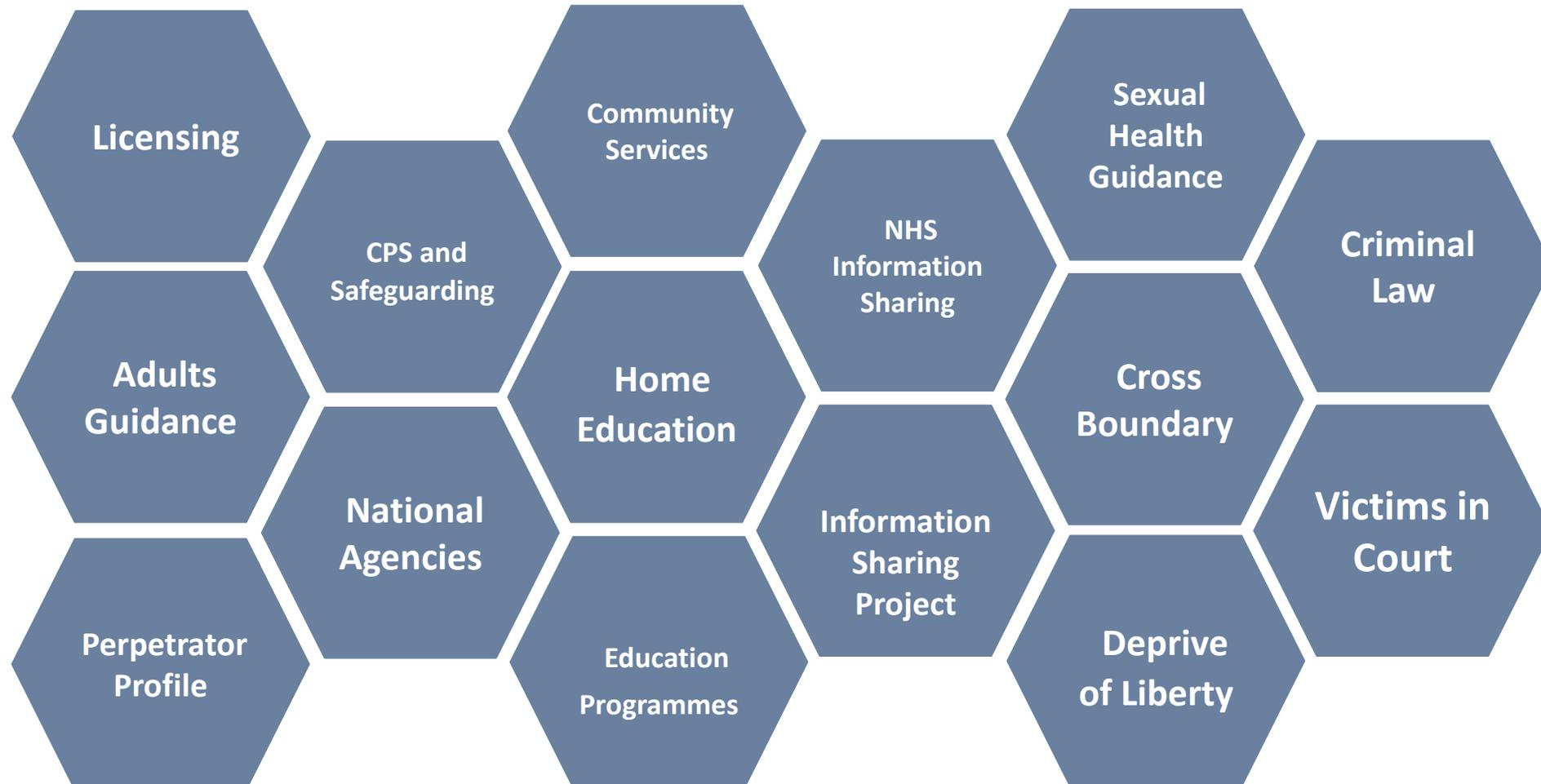


- The contributions from victims have improved significantly understanding of vulnerability, the impact of sexual exploitation and the long-term nature of the support that is required.
- In Newcastle, the exploitation has also involved vulnerable adults
- No evidence in Newcastle that decisions about taking action were affected by lack of concern or interest, misplaced fears about political correctness or fear of being seen as racist
- Tackling sexual exploitation must address the perpetrators – not only preventing their activities but understanding their motivation.

# Local Recommendations



# National Recommendations



Licensing

Community Services

Sexual Health Guidance

Criminal Law

CPS and Safeguarding

NHS Information Sharing

Adults Guidance

Home Education

Cross Boundary

Victims in Court

National Agencies

Information Sharing Project

Deprive of Liberty

Perpetrator Profile

Education Programmes

Home Education

**The review has reinforced the message to agencies that:**

**“if you do not recognise sexual exploitation of children and vulnerable adults in your area, it is because you are not looking hard enough”**

**Developments in Newcastle illustrate that determination and multi-agency victim focused services can make a significant difference.**

# What difference are we making?



*"I have support now – I now know what would happen much better. I could not have better support than Sanctuary. No-one can do more now."*

*"The support I have had has been exceptional. "*

*"The support from the Hub is brilliant."*

*"I appreciate the support now. Because I have had a bad time. Later (social worker) came to court. She was my rock."*

# Despite all of this



In 2018:

Two children were approached in a bar in Newcastle by two Asian men in their 40s who offered to buy them drinks and take them to a nightclub. They went to another bar and then to a hotel where they were supplied with alcohol, cocaine and MDMA. A third male arrived and the girls were both sexually assaulted, being made to perform sexual acts on the males and then on each other whilst the males took photographs. The incident went on for around 6 hours.



Sexual Exploitation is still happening!  
You are our eyes and ears – be alert



## Thank you Any Questions ?

NSCB website – training, procedures, information

<https://www.nscb.org.uk/>

NSCB Sexual Exploitation checklist

[http://newcastlescb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/cse\\_checklist.pdf](http://newcastlescb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/cse_checklist.pdf)

Joint Sexual Exploitation SCR

<https://www.nscb.org.uk/joint-serious-case-review-concerning-sexual-exploitation-newcastle>

To report non urgent concerns, email Northumbria Police Force Intelligence mailbox  
[forceintelligence@northumbria.pnn.police.uk](mailto:forceintelligence@northumbria.pnn.police.uk)