



## **Executive Summary**

### **Norfolk SCR Case Z**

This Serious Case Review (SCR) is concerned with the sexual assault of Child Z, a 14-year-old male, by a 20-year-old male care leaver (YPA) in June 2016 and the learning to be gained from an understanding of how and why this happened. The assault took place whilst the two males were being housed in temporary accommodation by a local District Council who was unaware of YPA's harmful sexual behaviour.

Child Z had been placed at the accommodation along with his mother and sister in January 2016 having been evicted from their previous rented accommodation by their landlord in November 2015. They were waiting to be rehoused in June 2016 and were eventually found suitable long-term accommodation in July of that year. There had been two referrals to the Norfolk MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) in 2014 but these had not needed any intervention by Norfolk Children's Social Care (NCSC).

YPA and his younger sister had experienced unsettling and difficult early childhoods which had resulted in both of them being taken into the care of Norfolk County Council when young. They were brought up together as Looked After children in a long term foster placement until YPA reached the age of fourteen. By all accounts, the placement met the children's long term needs for security, emotional attachment and stability. Unfortunately, it broke down for YPA who experienced the move to another placement as a traumatic life event, seemingly impacting quite significantly on his sense of security and vulnerability. Whilst having good general health he had developed Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) for which he received appropriate medication.

YPA developed inappropriate sexualised behaviour in early adolescence and in 2011, aged 14, was placed in a residential setting run by a private provider. He started to show signs of Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) towards younger boys and in 2014 received psychological intervention to address the behaviour that included a risk assessment. The Norfolk Police and NCS were involved with YPA on several occasions in 2014-15 regarding HSB incidents.

YPA was subject to regular Looked After Child (LAC) Reviews up to his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in January 2015, when he became a Care Leaver. As part of his pathway plan YPA moved into supported accommodation (a two-bedroomed flat) overseen by the residential home. He left the home on his own volition in the Spring of 2015 with no suitable accommodation and spent the rest of the year 'sofa surfing' with friends in North Norfolk.

Regarding health matters, there is currently no dedicated health service commissioned for Norfolk's care leavers, who receive their last health assessment as they approach their eighteenth birthday. Given YPA's diagnosis of ADHD, ongoing health input beyond the age of eighteen would have been beneficial to support his pathway planning. In this case, the health

services played a small part in the lives of both boys, both before and after the sexual assault incident. Health services were not aware of the sexual abuse incident in relation to either of the boys and Health was not included in any multi-agency decision making forums, such as the strategy discussions (see below).

YPA was arrested in December 2015 for the sexual assault of an 11-year-old boy and bailed with conditions that he should not have any contact with the victim and not be alone with a person under 16. The Police informed his Personal Adviser (PA1) of the bail conditions.

YPA and PA1 attended an interview with a young person's accommodation agency (AA1) in February 2016. His application for accommodation was refused due to the risks he presented to young people.

YPA informed his personal adviser (PA1) in early May that he was homeless and needed somewhere to live. He duly registered in mid-May with NNDC/Housing Options as homeless who made enquiries with NCS about his housing status. They were not informed of his bail conditions and placed him at the temporary accommodation on the 24.05.16 where there were several vulnerable children and young people resident with their families, including Child Z and his family.

YPA had been subject to a Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Perpetrator's Risk Assessment by Norfolk Police on the 12 April 2016 and graded as Medium risk. On the 10 June, the Police became aware that YPA was living in temporary accommodation and spoke to NCS about their concerns regarding the potential abuse of children living there. NCS agreed to contact the District Council/Housing Options and obtain the name of the staff member who had dealt with YPA's homeless application and provide this to the Police.

Unfortunately, due to a set of mistaken assumptions by both the Police and NCS, each agency thought that the other was taking primary responsibility with the housing agency for moving YPA. This resulted in a delay in moving him which eventually happened on the 24 June 2016. Unfortunately, this was not in time to prevent the sexual abuse of Child Z sometime between the 16 -19 June. The District Council Housing Options service only became aware of YPA's bail conditions and the ongoing Police enquiry from Children's Services (Leaving Care Team) on the 24 June 2016, which prompted the move out of temporary accommodation.

YPA was moved by the District Council from temporary accommodation on the 24 June. On the same day, Child Z's mother became aware of her son's abuse and made a complaint to the Police who arrested YPA that night. He was subsequently charged with the sexual assaults of an 11-year-old boy (the December 2015 arrest) and Child Z in late June and early July respectively. YPA pleaded guilty to the charges and was given a custodial sentence in May 2017.

Child Z was risk assessed for Child Sexual Exploitation by the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on the 27 June and graded as 'Standard Risk' and referred to Early Help. Subsequently, no support was offered. The family moved into new accommodation in July 2016.

The SCR resulted in one recommendation for the Board to take action to ensure that:

- The HSB procedures are fit for purpose and up to date.

- That there is a robust strategy to disseminate and embed the HSB policies and procedures, including the need for early risk assessments and management plans for children and young people identified as presenting HSB, across the safeguarding partnership that includes the Care Leaving Service, the MASH, and relevant sections of the Police service.
- That the findings and learning from this SCR will be widely disseminated and implemented across the NSCB partnership so as to make an evidenced and demonstrable improvement to the safeguarding outcomes for children and young people.

In addition, the report identified the following areas for improvement:

- a joint recommendation for Norfolk Children’s Services and Norfolk Constabulary assure the NSCB that, in cases of extra- familial child sexual abuse, arrangements (when appropriate) are made by the MASH to convene strategy meetings and initiate joint S.47 CSC/Police/EDT enquiries, in compliance with NSCB safeguarding procedures
- a recommendation to the Sexual Abuse Referral Centre (SARC) to report to the NSCB on the feasibility of expanding the service remit to include children and young people who have suffered non-penetrative sexual abuse.
- a number of single agency recommendations as below:

Agency	Summary recommendation
Children’s Services	To assure the NSCB that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the NSCB that the Leaving Care service continues to make progress to the point where it is rated as, ‘Good’, by Ofsted and achieves high quality outcomes for care leavers</li> <li>• a service is in place for early intervention regarding the assessment, treatment and risk planning of young people, including care leavers, who exhibit HSB.</li> </ul>
Local District Council	To assure the NSCB that children under 16 who are in need of temporary accommodation are found placements which maximise their safety and well-being by reference to the learning in this SCR
Norfolk Constabulary	To assure the NSCB that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the CSE Perpetrators’ Scheme is operating effectively</li> <li>• a safeguarding referral is made to the Children’s Services on arrest of an individual suspected of being a perpetrator in extra-familial sexual abuse of a child.</li> </ul>
Health and Voluntary sector	To advise the NSCB on any services outside of the SARC that can provide support to children and young people who have been sexually abused so that the Board can promote these services and address any commissioning gaps.