



Norfolk Safeguarding
Children Board

Learning from Serious Case Reviews

Case Z

Serious Case Review: Case Z

This presentation sets out:

- Summary of the case
- Methodology
- Narrative
- Terms of Reference
- Key findings
- Learning and recommendations
- The Board's response



Serious Case Review: Case Z

Summary of the case: the Family

Child Z, aged 14, was living in temporary accommodation with his mother, when he was sexually assaulted by a care leaver, Young Person A (YPA), also resident in the temporary accommodation

YPA was under police investigation for a sexual assault on an 11 year old, five months prior to this incident

Bail conditions stipulated that YPA should have no unsupervised contact with children under 16. The local district council were not made aware of these conditions when he presented as homeless



Serious Case Review: Case Z

Summary of the case: why an SCR?

The extent of significant harm to Child Z is unclear as he did not wish to engage in the process. He remains in the care of his mother, who is protective and meets his needs.

The NSCB commissioned an SCR to draw out learning around:

- Care leavers
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)
- Housing options for homeless care leavers
- Information sharing



Serious Case Review: Case Z Methodology

Scope of review started from the point YPA became a care leaver in 2015 through to the agencies response to the incident in 2016. Historical information on YPA was also considered.

Agencies involved were:

- Children's Services
- Norfolk Constabulary
- Clinical Commissioning Group
- Education
- District Council



Serious Case Review: Case Z Methodology, cont.

Methodology used a systems approach in order to identify the deeper, underlying issues that may be influencing how services are provided to children. Approach included:

- multi-agency collaboration on the SCR Panel,
- inclusion of front line practitioners:
 - 1-2-1 conversations with professionals, including YPA's residential home
 - Professional learning event
- meetings with YPA and Child Z's mother
- a focus on systemic strengths and weaknesses.



Case Z: Narrative – YPA historic information

- YPA went into care aged 7 and a half after a long history of neglect and witnessing domestic abuse.
- Disclosures of sexual abuse made when taken into care but then withdrawn
- Was fostered with younger sister in stable placement for several years, until placement broke down and he was moved to a residential home out of county for six months
- Returned to Norfolk aged 14 and a half and placed in residential home where he remained until he left care
- Incidents of harmful sexual behaviour reported from age 14. Psychologist was commissioned to work with him



Case Z: Narrative in scoping period

- YPA turns 16 in 2013
- Psychological assessment of harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) completed September 2013
- Social worker clearly assessed and named risks of YPA's HSB at point of leaving care

- YPA starts apprenticeship
- Residential home negotiates funding for him to stay in semi-independent living on their premises on condition he completes apprenticeship
- Apprenticeship placement breaks down and YPA moves from residential, spring 2015
- Initially shares a flat with a friend, then becomes homeless and 'sofa surfs' . In contact with care leaving team



Case Z: Narrative, cont.

- *Nov 2015: Child Z and his family made homeless*
- Dec 2015: 11 year old child alleges YPA sexually assaulted him. Arrested and out on bail, with conditions not to have unsupervised contact with children under the age of 16. Care leaving team aware.
- *Jan 2016: Child Z and his family move into temporary accommodation*
- Feb 2016: YPA attends interview with his Personal Adviser (PA) for housing with third sector provider. PA discloses bail conditions and provider cannot accommodate.



Case Z: Narrative, cont.

May 2016:

- YPA presents at local District Council office, seeking housing
- Housing Options Service confirm with Care Leaving Team that he is homeless
- PA is on sick leave. The manager responding to query does not disclose bail conditions
- YPA is housed in temporary accommodation with Child Z and his family, amongst other residents



Case Z: Narrative, cont

June 2016

- June 10-24: Police made aware of placement and with Care Leaving Team attempt to move YPA
- *June 16-19: Child Z sexually assaulted by YPA*
- June 24 (a Friday):
 - Housing Options made aware of risks and immediately move YPA to alternative accommodation
 - *Police advise Child Z's mum of bail conditions*
 - *Child Z discloses*
 - YPA arrested by Police for assault on Child Z, charged the following week

July 2016: Child Z and his family rehoused

May 2017: YPA sentenced to serve three years in custody

Case Z: Terms of Reference

Four research questions:

1. Critically examine the effectiveness, or otherwise, of the care leaver planning for Young Person A. How well did the plan meet his needs for transition to independent living and address issues of risk assessment and management of his harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)?

2. How well were the needs, vulnerabilities and risks to Child Z and his family assessed and managed by agencies during the time they were homeless and in temporary accommodation?

Case Z: Terms of Reference, cont.

3. Critically evaluate the efficacy, or otherwise, of inter-agency working, decision making and information sharing regarding the safeguarding of Child Z whilst in temporary accommodation. How child focussed were multi-agency safeguarding actions (including Police bail management) and did they comply with existing local inter-agency safeguarding policies and procedures?

4. Why did Child Z and his family not receive the appropriate multi-agency support services and early help offer following the sexual abuse?



Case Z: TOR1 – care leaver planning

Key Findings

In principle YPA's care leaving plan, per se, prior to leaving care in January 2015 was sound save for considerations of HSB.

The ending of YPA's semi-independent living pathway plan in March 2015 marked the beginnings of ineffective planning and meeting his needs.

As a care leaver there was minimal attention paid to his HSB risk.

Evidence that the care leaving team was inadequate whilst YPA was in its charge.

A missed opportunity in December 2015 at YPA's arrest to convene a multi-agency meeting to assess and manage his HSB risk

Case Z: TOR2 – assessing Child Z's needs

Key Findings

Child Z and Family's needs were mainly around being re-housed; no identified additional needs or vulnerabilities until post May 24 2016.

The placement was appropriate under the known circumstances.

Housing Options were not aware of YPA's risk until being told by Children's Services on the 24 June 2016 when he was moved.



Case Z: TOR3 – inter-agency working

Key Findings

Missed opportunity in April 2016 by Police CSE Perps scheme to develop a multi-agency risk management plan on YPA (albeit scheme was in an early stage)

Poor information sharing, planning and not child centred

Under current Police and Crime Act 2017, bail would be unlikely for YPA. He would be probably be released under investigation, with no restrictions. Hence importance of holding a multi-agency planning meeting at point of arrest and use of NSCB procedures.

Missed opportunity for timely strategy discussion and action under NSCB HSB procedures



Case Z: TOR3 – inter-agency working, cont.

Key Findings

Children's Services and Police actions during June 10-24 was ineffective due to several factors, including:

- no Personal Adviser (PA) in place
- poor Children's Services management and oversight
- inadequate briefing to PA2, who picked up the case
- poor prep of Care Leaving Team, including:
 - safeguarding knowledge
 - staff shortages
 - misunderstanding around confidentiality and data protection
- lack of Police Single Point Of Contact,
- mistaken assumptions between Police and Children's Services that the other was liaising with Housing Options to move YPA.



Case Z: TOR4 – post disclosure service offer

Key Findings

Timely police enquiry after June 24 leading to speedy arrest and charging of YPA.

Child Z did not receive post abuse support:

- should have been a strategy discussion leading to a Child in Need support plan*
- did not happen due to weekend reduced service: no Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH, including social care) analysis until Monday morning meeting and then insufficient focus on Child Z's medium/longer term needs*
- overemphasis on processing criminal enquiry*
- Child Z was wrongly processed through Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) risk assessment*
- Possible tendency to conflate CSE and Child Sexual Abuse*



Case Z: Six Key Lessons

1. Norfolk Children's Services should retain a focus on improvement to ensure its leaving care service is consistently fit for purpose.
2. The need for the NSCB and agencies to put in place effective early intervention services for the assessment, treatment and risk planning of young people, including care leavers, who exhibit harmful sexual behaviour.
3. Housing:
 - Children's Services shall not place unaccompanied children under 16 in temporary accommodation
 - Local housing authorities and their agents should not place 'households' with children under 16 in non-self contained temporary accommodation or with shared communal facilities unless there is no alternative
 - Local housing authorities shall adhere to this policy by retaining an reporting relevant statistics on temporary accommodation

Case Z: Six Key Lessons, cont.

4. Arrangements to be in place so that Police CSE Perpetrators' risk assessments result in effective and timely multi-agency planning of suspected individuals.
5. On the arrest of individuals for alleged extra-familial sexual offences against children, the Police should make a referral to the MASH who will arrange for a strategy discussion to be held and if necessary, the initiation of a S.47 enquiry, safeguarding of the child and, if relevant, the identification of the suspect as a care leaver.
6. The need for the care leavers' service to be familiar with the NSCB Information Sharing protocol, the limits of data protection and when it is necessary to override confidentiality in the interests of safeguarding vulnerable individuals



Case Z: Multi Agency Recommendations

The NSCB: to take action to ensure that:

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



Multi Agency Recommendations, cont.

- **Norfolk Children's Services and Norfolk Constabulary**: a joint recommendation to 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
- **The Sexual Abuse Referral Centre (SARC)**: a recommendation 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.



Case Z: Single Agency Recommendations

Children's Services: to assure the NSCB that

- 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
- a service is in place for early intervention regarding the assessment, treatment and risk planning of young people, including care leavers, who exhibit HSB.

Local District Councils: 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



Single Agency Recommendations, cont.

Norfolk Constabulary: to assure the NSCB that

- the CSE Perpetrators' Scheme is operating effectively
- 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.

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



Serious Case Review: Case Z - The Board's Response

- HSB self assessment audit, completed summer/autumn 2017: Norfolk one of 10 early adopters of NSPCC's HSB Framework
- HSB Team in place since June 2017, exceeding all targets – information available on NSCB website: [Child Sexual Abuse Resources](#)
- Additional training by HSB added to NSCB multi-agency training offer
- Early dissemination of learning: findings from Case Z included in SCR roadshows May/June 2018 ahead of publication
- Policies and procedures reviewed and in development

Serious Case Review: Case Z - The Board's Response, cont.

SECTION 11: AGENCY SELF ASSESSMENT

- S11 process developing beyond compliance checks
- Greater focus on agencies evidencing how they are disseminating and embedding learning from SCRs
- To include peer challenge and testing self assessment against working together in everyday practice

Children's Services out of intervention: from Jan 2018, no longer judged as Inadequate by Ofsted and moving towards good.

