

QUESTION FOR THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING 16.11.22 @ 10 a.m.

The Crowther report contains 47 recommendations. But there are three compelling issues in the text that are not covered by any recommendation. They are: inaction because of fear of being labelled as racist; treating the victim as an offender or as contributing to their own victimhood by their behaviour; and the particular vulnerability of looked after children. How is the Council going to deal with those issues?

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION.

As the the Leader of Shropshire Council said in her statement on 20.7.22, "We are reviewing all 47 recommendations and will apply all those that improve practice here". Exactly which recommendations will be acted on and how?

Response:

Today's briefing to members aims to update on all of the work that is being undertaken across the multiagency partnership in Shropshire to address child exploitation and to support children and families where children are being exploited.

The work we do and how we do it continuously evolves as exploitation changes. We work with the National Working Group to learn from Best Practice and to contribute to examples of Best Practice.

We always see children as victims first and work with others to understand this. Especially supporting parents to understand the

powerful aspects of coercion and control when children are being exploited. We refer children to the National Referral Mechanism when they are involved in criminal activity.

Practitioners and managers are alert to the risk of not acting for fear of a number of factors, such as threat of violence, as well as risk of being seen as being racist. Working with police to understand organised crime and what is happening is critical to address the possibility of this issue arising.

Shropshire has a number of looked after children placed within the county, as well as our own and they are vulnerable to exploitation. We respond to every episode of them going missing, work with homes to raise awareness and support all children who are vulnerable. Working with education is key as being in school is a protective factor.

The response to the Crowther report sits with Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership. A formal response is being developed.

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Portfolio Holder Childrens.