**Criminal Exploitation – Policy Statement**

**Definition**

Children, young people and adults at risk who are used, through whatever means, to engage in criminal activity by other young people or adults who are able to coerce them to do so. The coercion is achieved through grooming, intimidation, acts of violence and debt bondage. The individuals involved may not identify themselves as being ‘exploited’ as such, but it is clearly to their detriment that they are involved in this type of activity.

Criminal exploitation is a safeguarding issue and everyone has a responsibility to protect and support individuals.

**Vision**

To ensure a coordinated multi-agency response to protect and support children, young people and adults at risk involved in, or at risk of, criminal exploitation. This includes the disruption, arrest and prosecution of offenders. We will do this by raising awareness of practitioners and communities to identify, and act upon, the indicators of exploitation.

**Response**

Children, young people and adults who are exploited, coerced or trafficked into committing crimes are victims who require a safeguarding response and access to support. **As such, any practitioner who has concerns about an individual who is being, or at risk of, criminal exploitation should follow their local safeguarding guidance and share this information with the relevant services. If you believe a person is in immediate risk of harm, you should contact the police.**

**What we know/ key messages**

* The National Crime Agency believes criminal exploitation is present in some form in all counties in England and Wales.
* Criminal exploitation is a hidden but increasing crime, with numbers still emerging in Manchester and work ongoing to build a clear picture of scale.
* Criminal exploitation is typically carried out by Organised Crime Groups and criminal networks.
* Victims will often be used to prepare, store, operate phone lines in connection with, and deliver controlled drugs. In Manchester, exploitation also includes the storage of firearms and money as well as wider criminal activity such as committing robbery offences.
* Victims often live in the same local area as the exploiters and will be coerced into engaging in criminal activity both within and outside of Manchester.
* Children, young people and adults at risk are especially vulnerable to criminal exploitation.
* ‘Cuckooing’: This term refers to the exploiters acquiring the use of a local property occupied by an adult at risk which they can use as a base for their criminal activities.



**Criminal Exploitation - Useful Links**

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| Document | Link |
| Delivery Plan |  |
| Complex Safeguarding Services Form |  |
| Seven minute briefing document |  |
| Manchester Safeguarding Board Guidance and Information | <https://www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/resource/referral-form-guidance/> |
| Manchester Modern Slavery Strategy | <https://www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/resource/modern-slavery/> |
| Modern Slavery Act Legislation | <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/contents/enacted> |
| Trapped Campaign | <https://www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/trapped-campaign/> |
| National Crime Agency Publication | <http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/832-county-lines-violence-exploitation-and-drug-supply-2017/file> |
| Children’s Society County Lines Toolkit | <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/toolkit_criminal_exploitation_and_county_lines.pdf> |
| National Serious Violence Strategy | https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy |

**Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) contact details**

The Manchester MASH operate a **consultation line** for partner agencies – the number is **0161 219 2895** and is available between 8.45am and 4.30pm on weekdays

All concerns about the safety or welfare of a child, young person or adult must go through the Manchester Contact Centre: Telephone: 0161 234 5001 (open 24 / 7) Email: [mcsreply@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:mcsreply@manchester.gov.uk)