



Discussion at:	Joint Independent Ethics Committee (JIEC)
JIEC Date:	17 September 2025
Subject/ Dilemma:	Non-recent child sexual abuse investigations – How each organisation plans to respond to the Casey Review
Report of:	<i>West Yorkshire Police</i>
Presenter:	D/Supt Emma Winfield and Principal Analyst Paul Smith

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To get independent advice and opinion from the Joint Independent Ethics Committee to inform and influence decision making.
- 1.2 For JIEC Members to highlight areas of focus for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chief Constable to consider.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 West Yorkshire Police have dedicated investigative structure in response to non-recent child sexual exploitation and abuse. An overview will be provided of the current investigative structures and governance. An explanation as to how the Smith Algorithm was developed and used. Drawing on information shared with Baroness Casey when she completed an audit of the force in April.

3. KEY QUESTIONS/ SPECIFIC AREAS OF FOCUS FOR THE COMMITTEE

- **How can West Yorkshire Police ensure that all partner agencies are sharing non-recent CSEA information without fear of reputational harm?**
Rationale: The Casey Review highlights that reputational concerns often inhibit full disclosure. Ethical policing requires transparency and prioritising victim welfare over institutional image.
- **What additional steps can be taken to demonstrate openness and transparency in investigations of non-recent CSEA to victims and the public?**
Rationale: Public trust is built on visible accountability. The Casey Review

stresses the need for clear communication and transparency in handling historic abuse cases.

- **How can the force ensure that victims' voices are meaningfully included in shaping future safeguarding and investigative practices?**

Rationale: Ethical practice involves listening to those affected. Victim engagement is essential for legitimacy and learning.

Discussion Summary

Members focussed on developing their understanding of the discussion topic and received information from subject matter experts, asking questions to find out more about specific areas. The Committee took a decision to split the topic into two parts; Part A, 'scene setting and understanding' which took place on 17 September 2025, and Part B, which would follow at the December committee, applying the learning within the broader context of the current environment which would include the Mayor's strategy on the safety of women and girls. As the two discussion topics ran parallel, the discussion summaries are repeated for each discussion topic. Member discussion summary from 17 September 2025:

- i. Members heard from subject matter experts in WYP and praised the work of the teams undertaking these complex and sensitive investigations. The support available for WYP officers and staff undertaking this emotive work was recognised.
- ii. Members felt that public reporting picked up by the media focussed on perpetrators, convictions and sentencing and highlighted the opportunity for WYP to promote the investment of specialist skills, knowledge, and experience which was victim and survivor focussed.
 - a. Members noted recent commentary from victims who felt unsupported, or who did not trust that the police could deal with their case; and noted that this supported the need for WYP to better promote the positive investment that was dedicated to recent and non-recent child sexual exploitation and abuse, including the skills and expertise of the teams and the available support for victims and survivors.
- iii. It was imperative that victims and survivors felt safe, protected, and heard, and that perpetrators were held to account. The risk of victims and survivors feeling inanimate as a result of the criminal justice system process felt high; Members acknowledged public anger and national petitions which highlighted that victims and survivors felt secondary victimisation, and their voices minimised.
 - a. Wherever possible, victims and survivors should be asked a minimal number of times to provide an account, to prevent repeat trauma.

Accepting the requests come from wider than WYP, the initial account should be documented with a view to it being used multiple times throughout the criminal justice process.

- b. The criminal justice system was highlighted as being a barrier to victim and survivor satisfaction, with waits as long as two years for court dates. WYP had monthly reviews with the Crown Prosecution Service to inform them of early investigative demand.
 - c. Outcomes should be meaningful to victims and survivors. Changes should be transparent and well communicated. WYP should provide assurance that change can, and will, happen; and demonstrate positive change clearly.
- iv. The impact on social cohesion should be considered, Members noted recent West Yorkshire based written publications which highlighted the impact on South Asian communities feeling persecuted due to the narrative in the media. WYP to be aware of how the media narrative could fuel action from right wing groups.
 - a. Communication should focus on factual data, noting that data can be divisive, information should be tailored, appropriate and fit for purpose.
- v. In terms of the scope of the inquiry, it was important to advocate for a West Yorkshire wide approach [and not a specific district]. Members unanimously felt that it would be damaging for West Yorkshire to have a single district investigated. It is of note that the decision lay with the Home Secretary.

4. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- 4.1 A power point presentation will be delivered which will provide an overview of West Yorkshire Police investigative response to Non-recent Child Sexual Exploitation and approach to Baroness Casey's report.