



13th December 2025

Dear Home Secretary,

Re: Inspection of the effectiveness of police and law enforcement bodies' response to group-based child sexual exploitation: A progress report.

I welcome this progress report which highlights commendable national improvements achieved despite financial constraints, while also emphasising the continuing threat of group-based child sexual exploitation and the significant harm these offenders inflict on society. I am also pleased to see West Yorkshire Police highlighted in the report regarding our approach to reduce serious and organised crime through the use of the clear, hold, build model which is key in tackling child criminal exploitation.

We work closely with the Force to ensure a joined-up response to group-based child exploitation. Since 2010, West Yorkshire Police has strengthened its management of all aspects of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Dedicated investigation teams were established in 2015 to lead the overarching operation into non-recent group-based CSE, and this work has continued across the region in successive phases. As of April 2025, this has resulted in significant outcomes:

- Since 2016, 210 defendants have been convicted in relation to non-recent and complex CSE, receiving sentences totalling more than 2,300 years across 24 operations.
- There are currently 48 non-recent CSE investigations ongoing in West Yorkshire.
- Sixty-two defendants are charged and due to stand trial at Bradford and Leeds Crown Courts in 2025 and 2026.

This autumn, the Mayor and I met with survivors of non-recent group-led CSE and West Yorkshire MPs to discuss Baroness Louise Casey's call for a national inquiry. The roundtable meeting provided a platform for survivors to share their perspectives on the inquiry's Terms of Reference and to seek the support of local MPs. The discussion included testimony from 14 survivors, including members of the Survivor Leaders Group – group-based CSE survivors who use the services of West Yorkshire's 3 commissioned Rape Crises - alongside eight West Yorkshire MPs. Survivors spoke powerfully about being failed by agencies during childhood, the lasting impact of exploitation and their ongoing need for therapeutic support to address childhood trauma.

I am assured that WYP is adopting the recommendations of this progress report. I am also pleased that the Force Safeguarding Governance Lead has been seconded to the NPCC to support the ongoing national inquiry following on from the Casey report. The Mayor and I maintain regular scrutiny of the Force's response to group-based child sexual exploitation through established governance arrangements, including the presentation of a child safeguarding paper at the public Community Outcomes Meeting and a non-recent CSEA paper at our Quarterly Governance Meeting with the Chief Constable and members of the Chief Officer Team. Nonetheless, I recognise the scale of the challenge ahead and the continued effort required to deliver the comprehensive and coordinated response that victims both need and deserve.

Regards,

Alison Lowe, Deputy Mayor of West Yorkshire for Policing and Crime



Recommendation 1

By 31 March 2026, the Home Office, Department for Education and all police forces and law enforcement bodies that are yet to do so should adopt the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse's definition of an 'organised network' as a definition of group-based child sexual exploitation. And they should make sure they use this definition in all relevant policies, training products, procedures and guidance

The latest iteration of WYP's CSE 'problem profile' document confirms the force's adoption of the IICSA definition of an organised network. It also acknowledges that current data recording systems are not designed to systematically capture associations between suspects. Furthermore, the document highlights challenges faced by officers in consistently applying the definition of suspects being 'known to' one another, noting the ambiguity of the term (e.g., recognising someone by sight versus casual interaction). The report recommends that WYP undertake further development of IT systems to enhance the recording and analysis of information relating to group-led CSE.

Recommendation 2

By 31 March 2026, all police forces should fully adopt and use the Hydrant Programme's child sexual exploitation problem profile template as a minimum when preparing their 2025/26 child sexual exploitation problem profiles.

WYP have supplied copies of problem profiles for the past two years, so we can feel assured that we have oversight of this area. We have received adapted 'partner focussed' documents from WYP.

Recommendation 4

By 31 July 2026, all chief constables should use the Hydrant Programme's guidance so forces can efficiently and accurately identify child sexual exploitation and group-based child sexual exploitation in their police record management systems.

West Yorkshire Police have noted that this recommendation will be implemented once the Hydrant programme guidance related to recommendation 3 from the report has been actioned.

Recommendation 6

By 31 July 2026, all police forces should devise a strategy to implement Operation Makesafe consistently and include this in their child sexual exploitation data returns to the Hydrant Programme. This strategy should include the adoption and use of the rebranded Operation Makesafe police and partnership marketing materials.

West Yorkshire Police have assured us that Operation Makesafe has been implemented consistently across the force and engagement work is being undertaken with businesses, such as hotels, taxi and takeaway companies, to raise awareness of the programme. CVET's and Neighbourhood Policing Teams conduct test purchasing operations to check the impact of the training. For example, Marriott Hotels have been engaged as part of the operation and future work as part of the 'winter of action' is planned which includes five operations using CVET teams by the end of January.

Details of Operation Makesafe and the Hydrant Programme have been shared with officers internally, including information on how contact staff, neighbourhood policing teams, response and safeguarding can play their role. The Force have also shared information on their [website](#).