

#### The Story

- Male G, a talented junior ice skater, was informally warned by Nottinghamshire Police in May 2012, when he was found to have placed a mobile device in the ceiling of the National Ice Centre intending to film a girl changing. He admitted he had done this before.
- The Centre allowed him to continue skating there but put safeguarding measures in place;
- In late 2012 he started to skate at the Hull Ice Arena. Staff at the arena were unaware of the previous incident in Nottingham;
- In May 2013 Hull Children's Social Care (CSC) received information that Male G had persuaded a girl skater from Hull to share indecent images with him;
- Hull CSC gathered information from Nottinghamshire agencies about the previous incident but decided to take no further action in relation to the new disclosure;
- In August 2013 Hull CSC received a further disclosure about Male G. This was shared with Humberside Police and a joint Police/Children's Social Care investigation initiated
- No information was shared with the Hull Ice Arena or with Humberside Police at this stage;
- Police seized devices from Male G and found evidence of non-contact sexual offences against under-age girls;
- Safeguards were put in place at the Hull Ice Arena and Male G continued to skate there until October 2013 when he was barred;
- When interviewed by the police in December 2013 Male G denied any offences;
- He committed contact sexual offences against one child and non-contact offences against another after he had been barred from the Hull Ice Arena and been interviewed by the police;
- These offences only came to light in October 2014 when images were found on his device and one of his victims made a disclosure to Humberside Police;
- Male G was convicted of sixteen sexual offences against children and was sentenced to three years in a young offender's institution

#### Voice of the Child

- The failure to formally investigate the initial incident in Nottingham meant that the victim, and any other potential victims, were not heard;
- Hull CSC did not speak to the victim who Male G was alleged to have asked to share indecent images in June 2013. This was initially at the request of the girl's mother who asked that her daughter was not seen whilst she was sitting exams;
- When the second disclosure was made in August 2013 Humberside Police and CSC from Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire responded swiftly and identified several girls who might have been victims of Male G and, in accordance with best-practice, spoke to them to gain an account of their experiences;
- The learning review felt that Male G misused his status as an elite skater and exercised power and control over his victims and that may have been the reason why some did not make disclosures when first approached.

#### What's going well?

- Nottinghamshire Police have made changes to ensure there is a better understanding and response by their officers in recognising the vulnerability of victims and the risks posed by sexual offenders;
- Since these events Hull CSC has introduced the Early Help & Safeguarding Hub (EHASH) to strengthen and improve the consistency of response to concerns about children and young people. This has enabled the co-location of key professionals and strengthened information-sharing;
- Hull Culture & Leisure Ltd have carried out a full and independent review of safeguarding practices across all services and are satisfied that children can skate in a safe environment;
- The National Ice Skating Association, and managers at the two ice arenas, made prompt referrals when they became aware of safeguarding concerns.
- Humberside Police led a painstaking and thorough investigation which involved examination of more than 30,000 digital items, identified additional victims and led to a successful prosecution. Since this time action has been taken to strengthen arrangements raised in this review about delays in completing these investigations.

### What are we worried about?

- The response to the initial offence in Nottingham in May 2012, and the language reportedly used by the police officer to describe it, indicate that its seriousness and potential significance were minimised. This set the tone for a failure to follow police policy and meant that opportunities were lost to share information, identify other potential victims, assess risk and safeguard children;
- In autumn 2012 there was a further opportunity missed by Nottinghamshire Police to share information about Male G when he was turning 18 and a Disclosure and Barring Check (DBS) was carried out because his mother was a foster carer. A decision was taken not to disclose detail of the previous incident;
- There might have been an opportunity to put risk management arrangements in place at the Hull Ice Arena when Male G went to skate there had information been shared about the incident in Nottingham, although any such measures are unlikely to have prevented further offending;
- Hull CSC missed opportunities to share information and make a full assessment of the risks Male G might pose to children when they decided to take no further action in relation to the disclosure made in May 2013;
- Following the second disclosure in August 2013 the police and other agencies moved swiftly to recover devices and identify potential victims. The sheer volume of the material recovered, limited resourcing allocation and Male G's denials meant it took nearly 16 months before he was charged;
- After male G was barred from the Hull Ice Arena and the police had seized his devices he continued to have contact with victims, using other devices he acquired, via social media and at other venues he visited. This illustrates the difficulties in putting safeguards in place in respect of online offending via social media.

### Learning for professionals and multi-agency practice

- Perpetrators can misuse their status to exercise coercion and control over their victims;
- Professionals need to be able to recognise and respond appropriately to the signs, symptoms and patterns of sexually harmful and abusive behaviour;
- Professionals need to be able to understand and assess the risks that sexually harmful and abusive behaviour presents and respond accordingly.
- Professionals need to challenge previous assessments and the professional views and actions of colleagues.

### What needs to happen?

The findings from this learning review will be actioned through enhancing the training and practice of people who work with children either as professionals or in a voluntary capacity so they can recognise how perpetrators behave and how to respond to children who may be victims of sexually harmful and abusive behaviour.

### Multi-Agency Resources for this Case

- Children and Young People with Harmful Sexual Behaviours (Research in Practice)
- Child's Play? Preventing Abuse Among Children and Young People (Stop It Now publication)
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour - NSPCC Research and Resources

### Safeguarding practice guidance and multi-agency training

*which can be found on the website:* [www.hullsafeguardingchildren.co.uk](http://www.hullsafeguardingchildren.co.uk)

- Harmful sexual behaviour among children and young people (NICE 2016)
- Provision of Therapy for Child Witnesses Prior to a Criminal Trial (Crown Prosecution Service )
- Managing Individuals who Pose a Risk of Harm to Children.

### Multi – Agency Training

Details for courses below and how to enrol can be found on the HSCB website

- Exploring the Impact of Child Sexual Abuse ( Awareness )
- Responding Effectively to Disclosures from Children , Young People and Adults
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Online