**TRAINERS to TRIALS**

 

**CASE STUDY**

During a visit to a family address, it was revealed to a Children’s Services Professional that “Mia”, a 14-year-old girl at the address, had recently returned home with a new pair of trainers (valued approx. £100). Mia had been resolute that the trainers were not stolen, having produced a receipt, paid in cash, for their purchase. It was subsequently disclosed to the professional that the trainers had been bought for them by an unknown person, who was only referred to by a nickname, “Jam”. Nothing else was known by the professional regarding the event. The professional did however observe from the receipt, the date and location the trainers were purchased. The professional then submitted the information, to police, on a CPI form.

This intelligence was then reviewed by the Police MET Team.

At that time, “Mia” was not graded on a CERAF or managed with any risk of exploitation concerns. Police conducted research on “Jam”, identifying a number of possible individuals, known to be using the same nickname. All were adult males with criminal records, one of whom lived locally.

Subsequent Police enquiries conducted regarding the receipt, lead Police to recover CCTV from a Sportswear shop. The CCTV from inside the shop, at the time of the transaction when the trainers were purchased, revealed that three adult males were in “Mia’s” company at the time.

Those three adult males were then identified. Again all were known to Police for a variety of criminal offences, including being associated with drug supply. All three were also known associates of a male using the nickname “Jam”, thus corroborating the male’s identity.

Collaborative working, both within the Police and cross-partnership, subsequently saw further intelligence submitted and developed, in relation to the three identified individuals. The intelligence picture which emerged highlighted a high level of suspected drug related activity on specific road on a housing estate. This was then linked to an existing recently emerged Drug Line.

A search warrant was obtained for the house. The primary target being the male occupier, who was an associate of all the three identified adult males seen with “Mia”.

During the search of the premises, significant quantities, of drugs (valued at approximately £25,000) and over £27,000 in cash was seized. A sawn off shotgun and live ammunition was also seized and removed from criminal possession, along with a variety of home-made weapons, a zombie knife and a stun gun.

The occupier was arrested and following a protracted investigation convicted of drug supply, possession of a prohibited shotgun and money laundering. He received a 9-year prison sentence.

**Reflection:**

Whilst the original CPI with the information about the trainers, was not and could never be singularly attributed to the final conviction, this was still a catalyst. The defining characteristic with this case was that intelligence provided by a partner agency, in the form of a CPI, had clear factual information that could be developed and pursued by police. It provided a sound basis from where meaningful enquiries could be conducted, which allowed the MET Team to begin looking at potential exploitation risk to children. In an ocean of thousands of intelligence reports from many sources, it can be difficult to assess which intelligence should be pursued and developed. However, where there is an identified risk which involves children and which can be further corroborated, Police can more effectively and efficiently direct resources and efforts, involving more Police Departments and more professionals, to achieve the best outcomes. Whilst no exploitation/ trafficking related charges could be evidenced in this case and the other four males were not charged (on that occasion) in respect of material found at the warrant, this is an example of how the METT sought to disrupt a criminal network, where there was a real risk of exploitative criminality. The drug line itself was completely terminated by this police action resulting in the safeguarding of multiple potential victims.