

# Domestic Abuse Steering Group

A meeting of Domestic Abuse Steering Group was held on Thursday 15 December 2017.

**Present:** Martin Gray (SBC) (Chair),

Councillor Jim Beall (SBC), T/DCI Helen Barker (Cleveland Police) , Robin Bonas (DTVCR), Dominic Gardner (TEWV)(Sub for David Brown), Emma Champley (SBC), Barry Coppinger (PCC), Steven Hume (SBC), Lesley Gibson (Harbour), Stuart Harper (NTFT), Councillor Steve Nelson (SBC), Barbara Potter (CCG), Callum Titley (SBC),

**Also in attendance:** Michael Henderson, Mandy Mackinnon (SBC)

**Apologies:** David Brown (TEWV), Councillor Ann McCoy (SBC), Steve Rose (Catalyst), Rosana Roy (NPS)

## 1 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 2 **Minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2016 were confirmed as a correct record subject to Stuart Harper being added to the list of those present.

## 3 **DA Operational/Tactical Meeting Minutes – 23 November 2016 Overview of Domestic Abuse within Stockton report**

Steve Hume provided an update based on the minutes of the Domestic Abuse Operational/Tactical meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2016 and a Domestic Abuse activity report April - September 2016.

There had been a meeting between Steve Hume and Helen Barker about reinvigorating the repeats work undertaken in Stockton. It was explained that there had been discussions around using the Council's analyst to collate appropriate data and it was anticipated that the Repeat Victims Group would begin meeting again.

Within the overview report it was noted that:

- Domestic abuse related crime continued to rise.
- 30% of DA related crime in Cleveland Force area occurred in Stockton.
- there had been a reduction in referrals to Harbour and a reduction in Police arrest rates for Domestic Crime. During the same period there had been a rise in presentations to Housing Option, Children's Services and Safe at Home scheme. The Operational Group was doing some work around these issues.
- 42% of all recorded incidents of DA were repeat which was a slight reduction from last year
- Coming into the festive period there was likely to be a spike in incidents.

RESOLVED that the minutes and report be noted.

#### **4 Whole systems approach to domestic abuse.**

Members were provided with a presentation relating to a Transformational funding bid around Domestic Abuse.

It was explained that there were 4 main elements to the bid ;

- Effective working within the criminal justice system
- Safeguarding with schools (Operation Encompass plus)
- partnership work with civil and family courts
- multi agency support and offender management.

Further detailed information about each element was provided and discussion could be summarised as follows:

- The bid was not gender neutral and came from the Violence against women and girls' strategy.
- Perpetrator work would include male and females and work in schools was a whole family approach.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner explained that his Police and Crime Plan included sections on supporting male perpetrators and victims.
- The bid provided a massive opportunity to do things differently but we may not see results immediately because there was a lot of focus on young people. This was a longer term approach to change the cultural attitude to DA in Cleveland
- The bid was about developing services across the Force area and using resources creatively.
- The plan was to have some level of intervention in all schools.
- Whole system approach based on the earlier the intervention the better.
- Desired outcomes would include reducing repeat victimisation.
- The bid was supported by an evidence base and included initiatives that had worked in other areas.
- Reference was made to some recent visits to initiatives in other parts of the Country, including Calderdale, and work around safeguarding hubs and targeting programmes and it was felt that some of this type of approach could fit into the bid.

- It was noted that there would be evaluation built into initiative
- Collaboration with all partners was an important aspect of the bid which would help with sustainability as all would have an interest in keeping something that was working even when funding ceased.

It would be important to link the bid and any subsequent work with the Strategy.

RESOLVED that the update be noted

#### **4 Domestic Abuse Action Plan**

Members were provided with a progress report on the Domestic Abuse Action Plan. The Action Plan detailed where partners had provided a response relating to work that they had carried out towards achieving key objectives and whether that action had been achieved or was being worked towards.

Some members, from organisations that had not as yet provided a response, indicated that they had made good progress against some of the objectives and would provide details.

It was understood that the new DA strategy was to be developed but information against progress on the key priorities in the action plan was relevant going forward.

It was agreed that the plan be recirculated.

RESOLVED that the action plan be recirculated.

#### **5 Developing the Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy**

Members were provided with a working draft of a new strategy, which included 6 key priorities.

Members were asked to provide their thoughts on whether the priorities were the correct ones and raise any queries, ideas they may have. Each priority detailed some questions that might assist members' consideration.

Discussion relating to the vision and priorities could be summarised as follows:

##### **Vision**

- There were no suggested changes to the Vision at this stage.
- It was queried if a three years strategy was the correct time period. There was a feeling that a longer term would be better for the strategy, accepting that the action plan could change on an annual basis. Five years was suggested but there must be a refresh process.
- Prevention should be a key part of the strategy
- The strategy should continue to be gender neutral.

Members felt the priorities were the correct ones, however, it was suggested that :

- Priority 1 as detailed in the draft strategy should be simplified and made easier to understand.
- Priority 6 in the draft strategy should, perhaps, be moved to priority 2 and written slightly differently, for example '*...educate , inform and challenge communities and all stakeholders...*'

### **Cultural Change**

- it was agreed that many of the key actions in the action plan e.g. adoption of a workplace Domestic Abuse Policy were designed to contribute to a change in culture around DA
- Consideration would need to be given to how training intervention would be delivered.
- It would be important to use the whole community as an asset.
- It was essential that the view was promoted that the behaviour was to be challenged and would not be tolerated. Work in schools and filtering positive messages into families and the community would be an important aspect of this.
- Social media would be useful to get messages out but something more enduring; less transient was needed to effect change meaningfully. This was where some of the work identified in the Early Intervention priority would come in, which would be more long term and developmental, but potentially more challenging, however, it should see positive long term affects.

### **Early intervention**

- Operation Encompass Plus would look to develop current arrangements and would include action on any patterns that emerged, providing support to schools in developing their role.
- Full systems approach needed to be mentioned in this section.
- It may be useful to include the long term aim to prevent incidents occurring,
- As well as directly challenging the unacceptable behaviour, perhaps there needed to be a narrative describing another way of family life and offering the support to the family to move toward this.

### **Repeat Perpetration of DA**

- Disengagement with the perpetrator service was a significant problem in the Borough and a multi-agency approach to resolving it had to be clearly articulated in the strategy.

- There needed to be a structure that facilitated preliminary work with individuals before getting them to engaged with a long programme.
- The majority of perpetrators on programmes were men and it was suggested that there needed to be a better understanding of the numbers of actual female perpetrators and services that were available to help them.
- It was agreed that this strategy had to lead to real change, and this would likely require changes to funding and types of activity.

### **Victims of Domestic Abuse**

- It was suggested that the extent of under reporting of male victims needed to be properly understood, so that it could be properly taken account of, strategically. Also, it was essential that the cultural change aspect of the strategy considered any differences in how male victims might be currently viewed, by the community, compared to female victims.
- Information sharing between agencies would help support victims and there was discussion around the ECINS system, which was being developed by partner agencies. The system included a specific domestic abuse function. Reference was made to Calderdale's approach that dealt with information sharing via a daily meeting and a member of staff with access to relevant records.
- It was note that there were things that health partners could do that did not require additional funding and it would be helpful if this could be identified and be reflected in the draft Strategy.

### **Children, young people and families**

- Understanding and reducing the impact on children and young people.
- Children's Services was looking at the skills and capacity of Social Workers to do work under this priority but there would need to be collaboration between all partners.

### **Working together.**

- This may move up the list of priorities.
- Partners working together to make a difference and committing to delivering the strategy

### **RESOLVED that**

1. the draft strategy and priorities be supported.
2. the discussion be noted and the strategy be amended and developed further, prior to submission to the Group's next meeting.

## **8 Forward Plan**

Members noted the Forward Plan and discussed potential items for future meetings, including Operation Encompass, Needs Assessment. This would be considered further outside the meeting.