

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board held via Microsoft Teams video conferencing on Friday, 29 September 2023.

PRESENT

Mrs D. Taylor CC (in the Chair)

Cllr. L. Phillimore	Community Safety Partnership Strategy Group Chair - Blaby District Council
Cllr. L. Blackshaw	Community Safety Partnership Strategy Group Chair - Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr. P. Cumbers	Community Safety Partnership Strategy Group Chair – Melton Borough Council
Cllr. D. Woodiwiss	Community Safety Partnership Strategy Group Chair – Harborough District Council
Cllr. K. Loydall	Community Safety Partnership Strategy Group Chair – Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Cllr. G. Waller	Rutland County Council
Joshna Mavji	Public Health, Leicestershire County Council
Bob Bearne	Probation Service
Wendy Hope	Integrated Care Board
Carla Barker	Leicestershire GATE
Suki Kaur	Freeva
Claire Weddle	Freeva
Sophie McGoff	Women’s Aid Leicestershire
Debbie Hughes	Living Without Abuse

Officers

Gurjit Samra-Rai	Leicestershire County Council
Sabrina Hussain	Leicestershire County Council
Sharon Cook	Leicestershire County Council
Lillie Green	Leicestershire County Council
Euan Walters	Leicestershire County Council
Giuseppe Vassallo	Charnwood Borough Council
Rachel Burgess	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Apologies

Cllr. M. Mullaney	Community Safety Partnership Strategy Group Chair – Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
Cllr. M. Wyatt	Community Safety Partnership Strategy Group Chair – North West Leicestershire District Council
Cllr C. Wise	Rutland County Council
Mr. N. Bannister CC	Combined Fire Authority
Chief Supt Johnny Starbuck	Leicestershire Police
Carly Turner	Leicestershire County Council

8. Welcome, introductions and apologies.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Board, introductions were made and the list of apologies was noted.

9. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2023 were taken as read and confirmed as a correct record.

10. Rutland Council membership of the Leicestershire Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board.

The Board considered a report of Rik Basra, Community Safety Coordinator, Leicestershire County Council which sought approval for Rutland County Council to become members of the Board. The report was presented by Gurjit Samra-Rai, Community Safety Manager, Leicestershire County Council. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 3', is filed with these minutes.

It was explained that were Rutland County Council to become members of the Board the Leicestershire Domestic Abuse Reduction Strategy would be updated to include reference to Rutland, and ultimately the aim would be to have one Domestic Abuse Reduction Strategy covering both Leicestershire and Rutland.

Members welcomed the proposals and voiced their support for greater partnership working between Leicestershire and Rutland with regards to Domestic Abuse.

It was requested that the new Terms of Reference for the Board be amended so that the Rutland representative on the Board be described as "the Rutland County Council Cabinet member with responsibility for Community Safety" rather than "the Cabinet Lead Member for Community Safety". This was because changes to the Rutland County Council Cabinet portfolios were expected at some point.

## RESOLVED:

- (a) That Rutland County Council become members of the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board and the name of the Board be changed to the Leicestershire and Rutland Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board.
- (b) That the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Board be approved, plus the additional amendment that the Rutland representative on the Board be described as "the Rutland County Council Cabinet member with responsibility for Community Safety".

11. Domestic Abuse Act 2021 updates.

The Board considered a report of Gurjit Samra-Rai, Community Safety Manager, Leicestershire County Council which provided an update on how the Council's duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 were being fulfilled including the duty to provide accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 4', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) A Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment had also been carried out in Rutland as well as in Leicestershire and as Rutland County Council had now become a formal member of the Board future updates to the Board would cover information relating to Rutland.
- (ii) There was a shortage of accommodation for victims of domestic abuse in Leicestershire and it was not expected that this problem would be solved imminently. Leicestershire County Council was doing the best it could with the money and accommodation that was available. The most vulnerable and the homeless were being prioritised.
- (iii) With regards to the performance data that came to the Board the latest Board report contained quarterly data from providers and for future Board meetings this data could be broken down even further into demographics. Data for Rutland would also be included.
- (iv) In response to a query from a member as to whether any of the services being put in place were in relation to domestic abuse against the elderly it was explained that this was a known issue and relevant data was collected. Whilst Age UK did not have a specific service for Domestic Abuse, support for the elderly was available in Leicestershire but it did not come out of the Domestic Abuse Act funding. The Living Without Abuse outreach workers did work with older people. Freeva also supported the elderly.
- (v) The County Council usually carried out publicity campaigns around Christmas raising awareness of domestic abuse issues which often occurred during that season. Whilst a campaign had not been put in place yet for the upcoming Christmas work on this was due to begin. Living Without Abuse were carrying out their own campaign in November/December 2023 to make the public aware of what Domestic Abuse services would be available around the Christmas period. It was agreed that further details of this campaign would be circulated to Board members after the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the update on the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 duties, and particularly the accommodation-based support, be noted.

## 12. Presentation from provider - Freeva.

The Board received a presentation from Claire Weddle, Head of Victim Services, Freeva regarding the work of Freeva. A copy of the presentation slides is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) There had been a significant increase in the number of male victims accessing support and a dedicated male victim option was being added to the Freeva helpline in December 2023.

- (ii) Freeva had seen a large increase in the number of people from the gypsy and traveller communities that they worked with. The County Council also commissioned a service from Leicestershire GATE which supported victims of domestic abuse in the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. Reassurance was given that there was no duplication of work between the two organisations.
- (iii) A member raised concerns that as the contract with Freeva had not yet been renewed, staff at Freeva could be worried about their job security and look for employment elsewhere. In response reassurance was given that the County Council was currently evaluating the data in relation to the Freeva contract and if the decision was made to renew the contract, Freeva staff would be informed well before the contract ended.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the presentation be noted.

13. Any other business.

It was suggested that more providers of commissioned services should give presentations at future Board meetings. A member suggested that case studies could be provided which showed how a victim came to enter and exit a domestic abuse service. It was agreed that further consideration would be given to this after the meeting.

It was noted that Living Without Abuse, in partnership with Surviving Economic Abuse (SEA), were working on the Compass Project which explored how best practice in coordinated community responses to economic abuse could increase economic safety for victim-survivors of domestic abuse. It was agreed that a presentation on this Project would be provided at the next meeting of the Board.

14. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Board take place on Friday 15 December 2023 at 9.00am.

9.00 - 9.55 am  
29 September 2023

CHAIRMAN