

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicestershire and Rutland Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board held via Microsoft Teams on Friday, 28 June 2024.

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. S. Butcher	Community Safety Partnership Strategy Group Chair – Melton Borough Council
Cllr. J. Knight	Community Safety Partnership Strategy Group Chair – Harborough District Council
Cllr. C. Wise	Rutland County Council
Mr. N. Bannister CC	Combined Fire Authority
Sajan Devshi	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Joshna Mavji	Public Health, Leicestershire County Council
Bob Bearne	Probation Service
Wendy Hope	Integrated Care Board
Suki Kaur	Freeva
Sophie McGoff	Women's Aid Leicestershire
Debbie Hughes	Living Without Abuse
Chloe Bird	SafeLives
Nik Noone	SafeLives

Officers

Gurjit Samra-Rai	Leicestershire County Council
Lillie Green	Leicestershire County Council
Kaushar Girach	Leicestershire County Council
Euan Walters	Leicestershire County Council
Rachel Chubb	Melton Borough Council
Sarah Pickering	Harborough District Council
Giuseppe Vassallo	Charnwood Borough Council
Rachel Burgess	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
Mark Smith	Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Sarah Gill	Rutland County Council
Angie Bishop	Rutland County Council

Apologies

Cllr. K. Loydall	Community Safety Partnership Strategy Group Chair – Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Cllr. M. Wyatt	Community Safety Partnership Strategy Group Chair – North West Leicestershire

Sharon Cooke
Chief Supt Johnny Starbuck

District Council
Leicestershire County Council
Leicestershire Police

Rik Basra

Leicestershire County Council

1. Introductions.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Board and the list of apologies was noted.

2. Appointment of Chair.

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that Mrs. D. Taylor CC remains the Cabinet Lead Member for Community Safety at Leicestershire County Council and therefore according to the Terms of Reference she is appointed Chair of the Leicestershire and Rutland Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board for the 2024/25 year.

3. Appointment of Vice Chair.

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that Cllr. C. Wise is the Cabinet Lead Member for Community Safety at Rutland County Council and therefore according to the Terms of Reference she is appointed Vice Chair of the Leicestershire and Rutland Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board for the 2024/25 year.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2023 were taken as read and confirmed as a correct record.

5. Leicestershire Projects and Commissioning update.

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 3', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) As a correction to the recommendation in the report, it was clarified that at the meeting on 15 December 2023 the Board had already authorised SafeLives to undertake the review of the Needs Assessment.
- (ii) DLUHC had undertaken consultation with local authorities indicating that from 2025/26 Local Authorities would no longer receive specific Domestic Abuse Act funding. Instead, the funding would be part of the overall Local Government Finance Settlement. It would therefore be important to ensure that Domestic Abuse funding was ringfenced within local authorities to ensure that it did not get spent in other

areas. Reassurance was given that Leicestershire County Council was prepared for this issue and was making plans to ensure the County Council's duties under the Domestic Abuse Act continued to be met.

- (iii) The procurement process for the Safe Accommodation had now closed, however no organisation had bid for the £35,000 funding to provide support to male victims. Conversations would take place with providers to ascertain why no bids had been received. It was speculated that the small amount of funding available for that specific service could have been a factor. As WALL already delivered a male support project called the ADAM Project, and had been awarded £130,000 to provide Generic Support, they had been approached to see if they would provide the support to male victims as well and a response from WALL was awaited. WALL currently had rooms for 11 people and were trying to obtain one additional room.
- (iv) Panahghar had been awarded £85,000 to provide support for Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) victims. They had rooms for 6 adults and 3 children.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report and the update be noted.

6. Change to the Order of Business.

The Chairman sought and obtained the consent of the Board to vary the order of business from that set out on the agenda for the meeting.

7. Project Echo - Safe Lives.

The Board received a presentation from Chloe Bird and Nik Noone, Practice Consultants, SafeLives regarding the Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment work in Leicestershire, and Project Echo. A copy of the presentation slides is filed with these minutes.

Arising from the presentation and discussions the following points were noted;

Needs Assessment

- (i) One of the main focus of the work of SafeLives was ensuring that the voice of domestic abuse survivors was listened to and taken into account.
- (ii) The first stage in the Needs Assessment process was collecting information from the relevant agencies. Forms had been sent out to agencies and the deadline for returning those forms had been extended to Monday 8 July 2024. Focus groups and interviews with accommodation providers were also taking place.
- (iii) Once SafeLives had finished collecting and analysing the information they would produce a report with findings and recommendations. The report should reflect as well as possible the status of Domestic Abuse support in Leicestershire. It was expected that the findings would be ready to be presented to the September 2024 Board meeting.

Project Echo

- (iv) Project Echo was a pilot taking place in Bolton, Leicestershire and Sheffield. It aimed to ensure that the experiences of domestic abuse survivors was put at the heart of domestic abuse prevention work and informed the design and delivery of support services. It was intended that the voice of victims would inform both the strategic level and the delivery end of services.
- (v) In Leicestershire SafeLives was partnered with Living Without Abuse to implement Project Echo.
- (vi) A mapping exercise was taking place regarding the services currently available in Leicestershire. As part of this exercise consideration would be given to the accommodation available for victims of domestic abuse.
- (vii) Authentic Voice Co-ordinators (ACVs) were being recruited and it was hoped they would be in post by the end of August 2024.
- (viii) A webinar for practice consultants was taking place on 25 July 2024 and all domestic abuse professionals were welcome to take part.
- (ix) In response to a question from the Chair it was confirmed that SafeLives were trying to hear the voices of different cultures in Leicestershire, but some cultures were hard to reach. It was important to find out why some victims did not approach mainstream services. Engagement was taking place at churches and schools, and using whatsapp was also under consideration. It was suggested that the Local Area Co-ordinators run by Leicestershire County Council could help linking in with particular communities.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the presentation be noted;
- (b) That SafeLives be invited to attend the September 2024 Board meeting to provide updates on the Needs Assessment and Project Echo.

8. Rutland County Council update.

The Board considered a report of Sarah Gill, Principle Social Worker and Service Manager, Rutland County Council, regarding the Domestic Abuse support provided in Rutland under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 4', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) There was a different approach to Domestic Abuse in Rutland due to the smaller population and different demographics. Less than 10 referrals had been received in the current year and this was consistent with previous years. Given the older population in Rutland there was more focus on Domestic Abuse in the older age groups. There was also a focus on Domestic Abuse in military communities.
- (ii) In Rutland there was not such a high demand for housing as there was in Leicestershire but the demand was being monitored. There were strong links with refuges and housing providers.

- (iii) The Chair suggested that there could be more links between the Domestic Abuse work in Rutland and that in Leicestershire so that if it was not safe for a victim in one area they could be placed in accommodation in the other area. This suggestion was received positively and it was agreed that further consideration would be given to it after the meeting.
- (iv) Melton Borough Council were leading on the drafting of a Domestic Abuse Housing Protocol to assist local authorities in LLR particularly when helping victims to be moved into accommodation in other local authority areas. Rutland would need to be included in the Protocol. It was suggested that the Protocol could be brought to the next meeting of the Board.
- (v) In response to concerns raised that victims could be tracked by perpetrators using their mobile phone, reassurance was given that this type of issue would be covered by the Protocol. It was also explained that the contracts with providers required that safety planning take place at the beginning, middle and end of the process.
- (vi) One of the Strategic Priorities in Rutland was changing the behaviours of perpetrators and preventing reoffending. Practitioners in Rutland were now trained in the Modus Domestic Abuse Case Management software and attending Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) meetings. However, more needed to be done with regards this Strategic Priority and further work needed to take place with those people that caused harm. It was suggested that Rutland could link in with the Jenkins Centre who worked with people who were abusive and violent in their relationships to help them change their behaviour.

RESOLVED:

That:

- (a) The contents of the report be noted;
- (b) Officers be requested to provide a report on the Domestic Abuse Housing Protocol at the next meeting of the Board.

9. Dates of future meetings.

RESOLVED

That future meetings of the Board take place on the following dates all at 9.00am:

Friday 27 September 2024
 Friday 13 December 2024
 Friday 28 March 2025;
 Friday 20 June 2025;
 Thursday 25 September 2025;
 Friday 21 November 2025.