

LEICESTERSHIRE SAFER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY BOARD

18 JUNE 2015

DOMESTIC ABUSE UPDATE

Introduction

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Board on progress regarding domestic abuse including the work of the Domestic Abuse Partnership.
2. The Safer Communities Strategy Board has oversight of delivery of the Leicestershire Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Strategy. The Domestic Abuse Partnership delivers this strategy and will report on a regular basis to the Board on progress, risks and issues with regard to Domestic Abuse.

Domestic Abuse Commissioning

3. Leicestershire County Council has been working with Leicester City Council, Rutland County Council and the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner to commission joint sexual violence and domestic abuse support services for adults across the area.
4. Following the consultation on domestic abuse and sexual violence services carried out in January to March 2015 the agreed approach was a single support service across Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland for primary victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence aged 13+.
5. Procurement is being led by Leicester City Council and the Invitation to Tender for this was released on 7 May 2015, with a view to new services being in place from 1 December 2015. Tenders will be assessed by a panel made up of officers from each of the commissioning organisations and an officer from Charnwood Borough Council.
6. Transition arrangements have been set up for 1 April 2015 to 31 November 2015, continuing existing arrangements for IDVA, helpline and outreach and family services, but bringing together all outreach and family support arrangements with one provider; Women's Aid Leicestershire Ltd into a single bridging contract.
7. Further work is being carried out to determine the scope of Children & Families support regarding domestic abuse for Leicestershire County. This will focus on support for children from households where domestic abuse has occurred (child secondary victims) and will be part of a joined up approach with Early Help services and the new LLR Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence service. There will be opportunity for stakeholders to feed into this over the coming months.

8. Alongside these developments further work is also taking place to finalise care pathways for co-ordinated support for individuals and families affected by domestic abuse.

Prevention

9. In conjunction with the City Domestic Violence Delivery Group and funded through the Ministry of Justice competed fund the Partnership ran a 'How Many Times' awareness campaign regarding domestic abuse and sexual violence from November 2014.
10. The campaign materials and approaches were developed based upon direct work with survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence. It included use of radio advertising, social media, video, specific events, posters and community sessions to maximise reach of the campaign across the population as a whole, but also to those directly affected by domestic abuse.
11. The Leicestershire domestic abuse helpline saw a significant increase in calls from members of the public during October to December 2014 compared to previous months and previous years.
12. Embedding the use of the Safe Lives (formerly CAADA) DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment) risk indicator checklist was included as a recommendation in both Domestic Homicide Reviews published in 2014. The programme of training for partner agencies funded by the Safeguarding Board and the County Council resulted in 20 DASH training sessions for frontline staff, plus 3 Train the Trainer courses and 2 DASH for young people training courses overall reaching 537 workers. The Train the Trainer courses allowing ongoing training to be provided in 15 agencies.
13. Implementation of Operation Encompass in the County will commence shortly to go live from the start of the new school term in August 2015. Implementation will include provision of information and guidance for schools and will be reviewed in 2016 to assess the cost and effectiveness of the approach and consider revision and further roll-out, for example to early-years settings.

Engagement

14. Project 360 funded by the Police & Crime Commissioner through Ministry of Justice funding following a successful partnership funding bid is trialling an enhanced service for some repeat victims of domestic abuse to support their engagement in support and the criminal justice system to improve outcomes for them and their families. This project has been extended to run to the end of November 2015.
15. The full research evaluation is underway and will be completed in 2016. End of year findings from the initial project period show more positive outcomes regarding safety and confidence in services for those receiving the enhanced early intervention service, however this is based upon very small numbers.

Enforcement

16. Partners within the Domestic Abuse Partnership are exploring the development of the Integrated Offender Management Approach to domestic abuse.

City & County Delivery Groups

17. The alignment of City and County Domestic Abuse groups has taken place and is developing further. The group has trialled three-part (City/County& Rutland/Joint) and fully joint meetings and an overarching action plan is being finalised taking into account priorities across the areas. The joint partnership group will be known as the Domestic Violence Delivery Group.

Key Risks

18. As reported in the performance paper the number of referrals to domestic abuse services has increased slightly. This increase in referrals has meant that support services remain stretched. Some additional resources have continued into 2015-16. The IDVA service was looking to increase risk threshold for support, but that is now not required and the capacity of services and waiting lists will continue to be monitored.
19. The commissioning arrangements will represent significant changes in service provision across the sub-region. There is a risk for disruption of services and pathways from this change. Partners will be working together, with providers to manage this change and any transfer of service that occurs as a result of this broad re-commissioning.

Recommendations

20. It is recommended that:
 - (a) The Board notes the progress of commissioning regarding domestic abuse;
 - (b) The Board notes the work and development of the Domestic Abuse Partnership;
 - (c) The Board notes the key risks with regard to domestic abuse at this time.

Officer to contact

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