

LEICESTERSHIRE SAFER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY BOARD

10 DECEMBER 2015

DOMESTIC ABUSE UPDATE

Introduction

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Board on progress regarding tackling domestic abuse including the work of the Domestic Violence Delivery Group.
2. The Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board has oversight of delivery of the Leicestershire Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Strategy. The Domestic Violence Delivery Group 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 and Sexual Violence 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. The new single Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence support and information service for primary victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence commenced on 1 December 2015.
5. The service includes a single helpline number for the area for members of the public to call for advice, information or support related to domestic abuse or sexual violence, in place of the many numbers previously in place across the area. The new helpline number is 0808 802 0028, this is free from all phones and does not appear on phone bills. There is also a single business line for practitioners seeking advice or looking to make referrals for support - 0116 2550004.
6. The service is available to all primary victims of domestic abuse or sexual violence aged 13 and above, and in addition to the helpline support will provide IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Adviser), ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Adviser), engagement and recovery support, through one-to-one and group-work approaches. It will also co-ordinate support and provide a programme of training for professionals.
7. The service is being delivered by specialist domestic abuse and sexual violence providers with significant local experience; Women's Aid Leicestershire Ltd, Living without Abuse and FreeVA, as part a consortium organisation called United

Against Violence and Abuse (UAVA). UAVA has a partnership arrangement with local therapeutic support providers to provide counselling support and will also work closely with other specialist support agencies and the new Victim First service.

8. The new model may result in a different form of service delivery than partners were used to, as capacity of the service will not cover the previous level of one-to-one face-to-face support in Leicestershire County, previously funded through a variety of sources. However there will be support pathways for all referrals and UAVA have not identified that capacity will be an issue in achieving good outcomes relating to the safety, health and well-being of all people referred for support through its new model. The impact of the new model on outcomes will be assessed after the first four months of operation.
9. Previous helpline numbers are set up to forward directly to the new number for a couple of months to take account of previous publicity that may remain in circulation.
10. Initial information and communication has been focussed on practitioners in Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland, through internal communications and briefing sessions delivered by UAVA across the area.
11. Higher profile public launch campaigns are planned for the New Year, however in the meantime the new helpline number can be used in any already planned publicity from 1st December. All agencies should ensure their websites refer to the new number.
12. Contract management of the service will be led by Leicester City Council, and through a partnership Joint Commissioning and Assurance Board made up of the commissioning organisations. This will feed into the governance structures of each organisation and the information will be used to feed into the domestic violence and sexual violence delivery groups and safeguarding boards.
13. A service user oversight group has been set up made up of service users that were involved in the commissioning process. This group will have a continued role in oversight, scrutiny and development of the service.

Support for Children affected by domestic abuse

14. From 1st December the JADA (Journey Away from Domestic Abuse) contract for domestic abuse family support, and therefore support services provided by WALL (Womens Aid Leicestershire Ltd) for children ceased, except for some provision for existing cases to the end of March to ensure appropriate case closure.

15. Leicestershire County Council will not be commissioning any support services for child secondary victims of domestic abuse, as the Council moves to an approach of embedding support for these children affected by domestic abuse within Children and Family Services and the children's workforce more broadly.
16. It is important that the children's workforce can respond effectively to the impact of domestic abuse on children as this is a significant child welfare and safeguarding issue, and we are working to ensure that this is recognised as core business across children's services and the children's workforce.
17. Domestic abuse champions have been recruited in the County Council within Social Care, Safeguarding and Early Help across services and localities and discussions are ongoing with health colleagues around how this can be extended further across the children's workforce.
18. These champions will support their teams to develop their confidence and practice wisdom in working with children affected by domestic abuse and support the embedding of interventions to support child secondary victims.
19. Referrals for support for children affected by domestic abuse should be made through the hubs.

Other Delivery Group updates

20. Operation Encompass is a scheme to share police information on reports of domestic abuse with schools, where children of school age are in the household. This commenced in Leicestershire County in September 2015.
21. Since the scheme commenced an average of 2 calls a day have been made to schools. Feedback from schools has been very positive and a similar approach is part of considerations around information sharing with health regarding domestic abuse.
22. The delivery group are considering information sharing with health agencies within a broader review of information sharing and support pathways for domestic abuse with the Safeguarding Boards.
23. Other key areas of work for the delivery group include work to develop understanding of perpetrators and approaches to work with perpetrators and the group are developing their performance framework to support effective identification and response to issues related to domestic abuse.

Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)

24. Two domestic homicide reviews are in progress in Leicestershire. An alternative 'Appreciative Inquiry' into an incident that did not meet the criteria for a full review has taken place and the report is being finalised.

25. Partner contributions to the Domestic Homicide Review process for 2015/16 will not be drawn down by Leicestershire County Council due to underspend on independent authors against budget in previous years due to less DHRs than planned. Contributions for 2016/17 are expected to be required to the agreed level as set out below. The level of contributions will be reviewed next year for 2017/18 onwards.

- Leicestershire County Council £30,000
- Leicestershire Police £16,000
- Rutland County Council £2,500
- District Councils x 7 @ £2,500 £17,500

Key Risks

26. The new service approaches for primary victims through UAVA and for child secondary victims through children and family services 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 continue to work together to manage this change and ensure a continued effective safe service for people affected by domestic abuse and will monitor impact on people affected by domestic abuse.

Recommendations

27. It is recommended that:

- (a) The Board notes the progress of commissioning regarding domestic abuse;
- (b) The Board notes the key risks with regard to domestic abuse at this time.

Officer to contact

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