

LEICESTERSHIRE SAFER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY BOARD**10 DECEMBER 2018****MINISTRY OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
BID (THE HOPE PROJECT)****Introduction**

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the current Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DA/SV) service, advise of the forward plan for the redesign and recommission of the service post March 2020 and to inform the Board of a bid that has been approved by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

Background

2. A [Sexual and Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland \(LLR\)](#) was completed in 2017. This has been the basis for providing much of the local evidence of need.
3. With a new commitment to establish a sub-regional strategy rather than authority specific approach, a [Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy \(2018-2021\)](#) has been developed.
4. The aim of the strategy is to reduce the prevalence, likelihood and harm of domestic and sexual violence and abuse with particular focus on prevention, early identification, reducing harm and supporting recovery and resilience through a partnership approach.

LLR SV/DA Service

5. The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Information and Support Service for Sexual and Domestic Violence contract, which provides Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) support services across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, will end on 31st March 2020. Work is currently underway to redesign and recommission the service from 1st April 2020.
6. The service comprises of a Public and Professional's Telephone Helpline, Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs), Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs), Recovery Outreach for those at standard/medium risk (including group work) and Therapeutic Support.
7. The contract was awarded to a consortium of local specialist providers, United against Violence and Abuse (UAVA), made up of Living without Abuse (LWA), Women's Aid Leicestershire Ltd (WALL) and Freeva.

8. For information about the UAVA offer and to download guidance and resources visit www.uava.org.uk
9. There have been a number of challenges; frequent concerns reported by professionals about inconsistent service and communication, particularly in relation to the reliability of the helpline function, have led to the formation of an Improvement Board and Improvement Plan governed through the Joint Commissioning and Assurance Board (JCAB) and chaired by Leicestershire County Council.
10. The Improvement Board has been working to mitigate risk, to understand the difficulties UAVA are having and offer support. Significant time and resource has been invested to understand demand and barriers to effective working, additional funds have been invested and the data burden has been lightened by creating a route for raw data to be provided and analysed by the contract management team. This has led to improved outcomes.
11. It is important to note that demand has increased during the contract period. Following a policy change by Leicestershire Police there has been a 60% increase in high risk assessments and MARAC referrals by the police; a decision to move to weekly MARACs means IDVA's are having to attend more meetings and there has been a 61% increase in domestic violence crime and a 23% increase in sexual violence crime across the sub region.

LLR Redesign and Recommissioning

12. The contract price for the period 1st December 2015 to 31st March 2019 is £231, 300 annually. A full breakdown is attached at Appendix 1.
13. Prior to starting the procurement for new contracts as required under the Public Contract Regulations 2014, a series of workshops were held to hear views from partners, providers and other key stakeholders on what is working well, where there may be gaps in current provision, and how to ensure our services continue to meet need in the future. These will inform the future structure of services across LLR.
14. A DSVA Service Redesign and Commissioning Group has been established to take this work forward, the Community Safety Team Manager from Leicestershire County Council is a member of this group.
15. A lead member Group has also been established, Chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner Lord Willy Bach. Mr Ivan Ould CC is a member of this group as is Councillor Sarah Russell, Leicester City Council and Councillor Alan Walters, the lead member for Community Safety from Rutland County Council.
16. A number of risks have been identified to date; each one will be considered carefully and every effort made to mitigate it:
 - i. Inadequate funding levels to meet identified need;
 - ii. Inaccurate projections of need;
 - iii. Lack of interested providers (bids);
 - iv. Inadequate time scales for robust solutions (commissions and bids);

- v. Loss of comparable data across time and across the geographical areas in the sub-region;
- vi. Stakeholder concern and/or confusion regarding model change;
- vii. Delay in agreement of model - of advertisement - of implementation;
- viii. Drop in quality during transition;
- ix. Lack of engagement of service users during transition period (pre and post new service/s).

17. The governance structure is illustrated below:

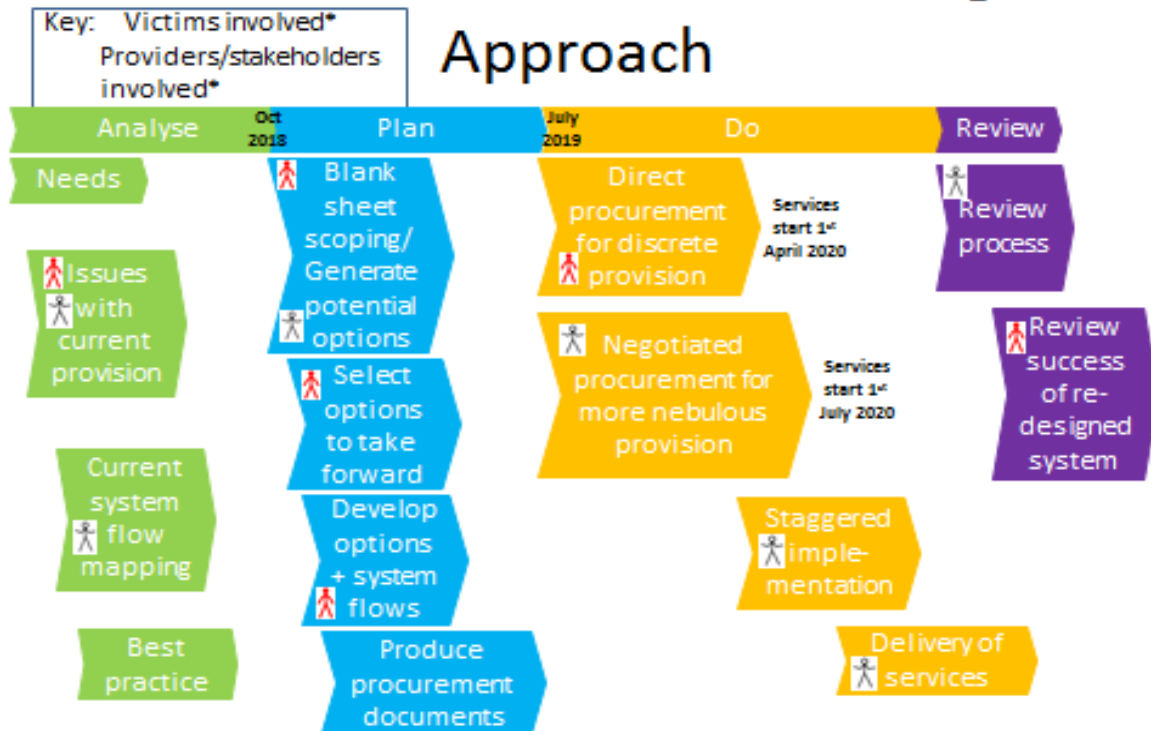
Governance



Proposal

18. The diagram below illustrates the proposed approach to the redesign and commissioning project:

Procurement/Commissioning



19. Leicestershire County Council's Community Safety Team Manager will continue to Chair and represent the Council's interests on the Joint Commissioning and Assurance Board (JCAB) and the Improvement Board and will represent the Council at the DSVA Service Redesign and Commissioning Group.
20. The lead member group will meet quarterly to agree proposals recommended by the Redesign and Commissioning Group.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Bid

21. MHCLG have confirmed that a bid submitted by Leicestershire County Council on behalf of the partnership for £882,373 has been approved.
22. This funding will ensure that more victims and their children access safe accommodation earlier and can sustain that accommodation and recover from their experience of domestic abuse more effectively through the recognition that enhanced provision is required for those with multiple vulnerabilities.
23. The proposal, The Hope Project, will provide further refuge provision for victims of DA, who have complex needs, have children or are Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER). Partners to the bid, across LLR, include all local authorities, police, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and drug and DA services. In order to ensure that more victims and their children are able to access safe accommodation earlier than they are able to currently.

The Hope Project

24. The funding will provide 21 additional units of refuge accommodation including 12 BAMER specialist units with extended staff support in place so that victims with multiple vulnerabilities can be accommodated. These additional units will be able to accommodate larger families and additional places in the County to reduce the numbers turned away because it wasn't safe for them in the area they wanted to move to.
25. A tiered approach will be adopted in order to provide additional trauma informed mental health support so that more people can be supported and victims who need the support can be reached earlier; specialist staff will work with victims who have substance use issues.
26. An officer will be recruited by Leicestershire County Council to work with local authority housing departments to make whole scale improvements across the sub-region, focusing on policy e.g. no recourse to public funds; allocations policies; interpreter policy; move on arrangements and possible adoption of something similar to the [PAN London Reciprocal](#). This officer will ensure there are robust and consistent offers in place for the Homelessness Reduction Act responsibilities and will build better relationships between local authority housing services and specialist providers of domestic abuse services.
27. The project will provide a broader skill base and build on good practice for supporting victims with multiple vulnerabilities and their children, including case support and co-ordination where appropriate, meaning that intervention is earlier and more effective. This will also help to ensure that there is better communication and a clearer offer of service, including a wraparound service which will maximise opportunities to stabilise existing housing where it is safe to do so.

Recommendations

28. It is recommended that:
 - a. The report is noted;
 - b. A further update is presented to the Board within 3 months.

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