

**SCRUTINY COMMISSION: 6 NOVEMBER 2019****RECOMMISSIONING OF DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL
VIOLENCE SERVICES****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY
SERVICES AND DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Scrutiny Commission of the recommissioning work being undertaken for the future provision of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) services, and to seek the views of the Scrutiny Commission as a part of the consultation.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. At its meeting in February 2019 the Cabinet gave approval for officers to consult on the re-commissioning of services to support survivors of domestic and sexual violence.
3. The proposed approach is informed by the Sexual and Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (LLR) published in 2017. This has been the basis for providing much of the local evidence of need.
4. The Early Help evaluation project (2018) involved detailed analysis of 787 Supporting Leicestershire Families and Children's Centre cases where domestic and/or sexual violence was present. These were cases that were closed between 2013 and 2018. One of the outcomes of this analysis was the significant impact of domestic abuse on outcomes for children and families. The report highlighted that children are most affected by domestic abuse.
5. With a new commitment to establish a sub-regional strategy rather than a single council strategy, a Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy (2018-2021) has been developed. 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.

6. The County Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 sets out five strategic outcomes for good quality of life in Leicestershire, including "Keeping People Safe". Supporting outcomes and measures to monitor these are set out in the Strategic Plan. One of the outcomes and measures is to increase reporting of incidents and scrutinising the number of re-referrals from Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences which are closely associated with the effectiveness of local resources for survivors and perpetrators of DASV.

Background

7. The County Council jointly commissions a Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) Service with Leicester City Council, Rutland Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Leicester City Council currently manages the contract on behalf of all the commissioners. The service is provided by a consortium of voluntary sector providers known as UAVA (United Against Violence and Abuse), which includes: Living Without Abuse, FreeVa, and Women's Aid Leicestershire. The service provides support to survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence over the age of 13 through the provision of:

- A telephone helpline for professionals and the public;
- Individual and group support for high risk and medium risk victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence;
- Therapeutic interventions, or counselling;
- Awareness raising, training and education for professionals and the public.

The current contract began on 1st December 2015 and ends on 31st March 2021

8. In addition to the main contract, across LLR there are a range of other contracts and projects being undertaken to address domestic abuse and sexual violence. For example, the County Council has funded:
- The Domestic Abuse Family Recovery Service (£40,000). This service works with children and young people and their families to reduce the harmful impact of domestic abuse and sexual violence upon the child. This contract began on 1st October 2018 and ends on 30th September 2019.
 - Safe Places and Support for Domestic Abuse Service (£115,263). This service provides tailored support for female victims of domestic abuse within a refuge setting. This includes but is not limited to: development of domestic/life skills, setting up a home or tenancy, gaining access to other services, managing finances and benefit claims, establishing personal safety and security, social contact and activities, enabling access to employment, education and training opportunities, and developing the skills and knowledge to be able to recognise and form healthy relationships and break the behaviour patterns associated with abusive

relationships. This contract began on 1st October 2015 and ends on 30th September 2019 with an option to extend up to 30th September 2020.

- Perpetrator Programme (£10,000). This is a voluntary programme working with perpetrators of domestic abuse in order to address their abusive behaviour; the programme also works with young people who are perpetrating child on parent abuse. This funding enables the spot purchase of limited places on the respective programmes.
9. There has been an increase in demand on domestic abuse and sexual violence services across LLR with limited resources within existing service provision to meet the growing need; on average the volume of domestic violence offences increased 17% each year in the last three years. This is a national trend.
 10. Following a review of the current service model, combined with a review of need across the sub-region, a revised delivery model is proposed across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, with the aim of meeting future demand within available resources. It is anticipated that the new service will commence on 1st April 2021.

Re-Commissioning Plans

11. An LLR Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Redesign Group has been established with representation from each commissioning organisation. This group reports to a Governance Group comprising of the Lead Members from each local authority and is chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner.
12. Stakeholder consultation sessions were held with current providers and other stakeholders such as other County Council departments and partner agencies across LLR in October 2018 to help understand the strengths and challenges of current provision. Key themes from the feedback were analysed and pulled together by the Redesign Group. A further stakeholder workshop was held in December 2018 to explore these themes in more detail to begin to shape proposals for future service provision.
13. Service user engagement has also taken place to ensure views and feedback from service users across LLR are incorporated into the service redesign.

Proposals

14. The key proposals for consultation are as follows:
 - (a) Delivery options for the telephone helpline (first point of contact). The options include:
 - i. Maintain a specialist domestic abuse and sexual violence helpline across the sub-region.

- ii. Make changes to the existing generic victim helpline contract so it can be used as the first point of contact for sexual and domestic violence specialist provision. This would mean having a non-specialist helpline, with specialists within a generic victim helpline.
- (b) High, medium and low risk levels have been grouped together into a single service. This leaves a number of options as to how this service is shaped:
- i. Only high-risk cases to be managed within this service due to high levels of demand and limited funding.
 - ii. A single worker in the service who has a mixed case load in terms of levels of risk.
 - iii. Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) primarily or exclusively supporting high risk victims.
 - iv. A wider group of workers supporting high risk victims as long as they have the right skills and experience.
- (c) The current service supports victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence who are 13 years of age and older. The County Council proposes that domestic abuse support for children and young people is delivered as part of its wider Children's Services, with staff who have specialist training.
- (d) In the current service victims often find that they have to repeat their story to different support workers in various services through their journey. In considering delivery options for coordinating support and care it is proposed that:
- i. There is a lead professional who works across all levels of risk and supports victims throughout their journey as the victim's only specialist worker (excluding counselling).
 - ii. A worker is assigned at first contact providing navigation to enable victims to access different specialists in a more streamlined manner.
- (e) Currently specialist workers are based in the City and travel to visit service users. Future delivery options include the co-location of staff within the locality including:
- i. Local hubs where domestic abuse and sexual violence specialists co-locate with other local workers such as housing offices, children's centres and health centres.
 - ii. Where people tell us that they would like to see services based.
- (f) Historically the refuge provision has always been commissioned separately, leading to victims in the refuge receiving a separate service to those in the community. Consideration is being given to combining these

services, offering one service to a victim irrespective of where they reside and potentially sharing demand within the one service.

Consultation

15. The consultation commenced on 24th September 2019 and will take place over a 12-week period ending on 24th November 2019.
16. The consultation is web-based; this is currently live, accessible via the County Council's website and can be found here: https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/sec/dsva_consultation/. The web-based survey has been supplemented in Leicestershire (as well as in Leicester and Rutland) by hard copy surveys and open public engagement events. These events are taking place in children's centres, libraries and district council offices. A range of advocacy groups will be consulted including but not exclusively CCGs, district councils, providers, the Police, County Council staff and service users themselves.
17. Following consultation, the commissioners (Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, County Council, Leicester City Council and Rutland Council) will design the new service model based on feedback from the consultation, level of need, affordability and good practice.
18. The outcome of the consultation and the final service model will be submitted to the Cabinet for approval in Spring 2020. This would be followed by a procurement process with a view to commencing the new contract/s on 1st April 2021.

Conclusion

19. The County Council has a safeguarding responsibility to provide services to address domestic abuse and sexual violence. The County Council currently jointly commissions a domestic abuse and sexual violence service with Leicester City and Rutland Councils and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The contract for this began on 1st December 2015 and ends on 31st March 2021.
20. There has been an increase in demand on domestic abuse and sexual violence services across the LLR area with limited resources within existing service provision to meet the growing need. Following a review of the current service model, combined with a review of need across LLR, a revised delivery model is proposed with the aim of meeting future demand within available resources.
21. In order to re-commission the service there are number of consultation events taken place across the county supplemented with an on-line and hard copy survey for key stakeholders and service users to complete. Views of the Scrutiny Commission are also sought are part of the consultation exercise.

Resource Implications

22. The total annual contract price is £826,000, of which £231,300 (28%) is funded by the County Council. Recommissioning of this contract will be within this resource envelope, partner contributions to the contract value are not expected to change.
23. The County Council's Public Health service currently allocates £115,263 per annum to provide tailored support for female survivors of domestic abuse within two refuges in Leicestershire. Consideration will be given as to whether amalgamation of this funding with the domestic abuse and sexual violence commissioning funds would provide greater value for money.
24. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.

Timetable for Decisions

25. The outcome of the consultation together with the final delivery model will be considered by Cabinet in Spring 2020.
26. Subject to approval by the Cabinet, the process of procuring a provider(s) to deliver the new service model would begin as soon as practicable, with a view to the new contract being in place from 1st April 2021.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

27. None

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

28. Whilst screening has commenced, a full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) will be completed following the consultation to review the impact of a change in service model. The EHRIA will be presented to the Cabinet in September 2019 alongside the consultation outcomes to assist the Cabinet with the exercise of its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

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Background Papers

- Report to the Cabinet 8 February 2019 “Recommissioning of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Services”
http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s144169/20190208_LCC%20Cabinet%20report_Recommissioning%20of%20DASV%20Servicesv5%20final.pdf
- Sexual and Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (2017)
<http://lrsb.org.uk/lr-dasv-strategic-docs>
- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy (2018-2021)
<http://lrsb.org.uk/lr-dasv-strategic-docs>
- Sexual and Domestic Violence and Abuse consultation
https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/sec/dsva_consultation/

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