



## **HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**18 MARCH 2021**

### **RECOMMISSIONING OF DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ABUSE SERVICES**

#### **MINUTE EXTRACT**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Public Health which informed of the plans for the recommissioning of the domestic and sexual violence and abuse services (DSVA) and the proposed model for DSVA. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed Mr. L. Breckon JP CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Health, Wellbeing and Sport, to the meeting for this and other items.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) Responsibility for commissioning DSVA had recently transferred from the Children and Family Services department within the County Council to the Public Health Department which was why the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee had not had the opportunity to scrutinise the service previously.
- (ii) Domestic and sexual violence and abuse services in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland currently comprised the United Against Violence and Abuse (UAVA) service which was delivered by a consortium comprising Women's Aid Leicestershire Ltd (WALL), Free From Violence and Abuse (Freeva), and Living Without Abuse (LWA). In response to a question about the efficiency of having three separate organisations delivering the DSVA service it was explained that as commissioners Public Health were not in control of which organisations submitted a bid and could not pre-judge which organisation would win the contract. Members asked for a flow diagram which demonstrated how all the partner organisations linked in together on Domestic Abuse and what proportion of the funding each received and the Director of Public Health agreed to provide this.
- (iii) The specifications of the DSVA service stated that it was required to meet the needs of all victims which would include males as well as females.
- (iv) There were concerns that the current service was very output focused when it was preferable for it to be more outcomes focused with the emphasis on improving the health and wellbeing of the people of Leicestershire rather than meeting Key Performance Indicators. The Director did not want to be too prescriptive with the way the new services were carried out. Moving the service to a more local model for Leicestershire would mean that local need could be

better taken into account for example in rural areas, and local contract performance monitoring could take place. It was suggested that future performance reports to the Committee could contain the performance data relating to domestic and sexual violence and abuse services.

- (v) Leicester City Council was leading on procurement of Domestic violence and abuse Perpetrator Interventions. However, Leicestershire County Council was aware that the majority of perpetrator programmes were focused on those perpetrators that wanted to change their behaviours whereas the County Council preferred to invest in a programme that would work with all perpetrators whether they wished to change their behaviour or not. The County Council was carrying out further work in this regard and in the meantime it was intended that Leicestershire County Council would spot purchase the Perpetrator Interventions service. Aside from the local authority led perpetrator work there was other work taking place with perpetrators across the criminal justice system.
- (vi) The Government had provided additional funding to local authorities to provide safe accommodation for abuse survivors and their families, and Leicestershire had received £1.1 million from this fund. Consideration was being given to where this money should be spent and the governance arrangements around it. It was hoped that the funding would not just provide a refuge for victims but help put in place wider initiatives for keeping survivors safe.
- (vii) Commissioning partners did liaise and engage with Community Safety Partnerships particularly during development of the draft proposal and as part of consultation on the draft proposal. Also, a representative from Public Health provided updates to Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board meetings.
- (viii) Consideration was being given to whether the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee could, jointly with other scrutiny Committees, carry out a wider piece of scrutiny work related to what initiatives the County Council had in place to protect women from violence and harm.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the update regarding the recommissioning of the domestic and sexual violence and abuse services (DSVA) and the proposed model for DSVA be noted;
- (b) That the comments now made be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 23 March 2021.