

LEICESTERSHIRE SAFER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY BOARD

10th DECEMBER 2021

**LSCSB UPDATE: COMMISSIONING OF DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL
VIOLENCE AND ABUSE (DSVA) SERVICES**

**REPORT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY
COUNCIL**

Background

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress in relation to the re-commissioning of domestic and sexual violence and abuse (DSVA) services for Leicestershire. LSCSB received its last update in December 2020.
2. Commissioning partners are: Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, Rutland County Council, and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic existing contracts have been extended to 31st March 2022.
3. Following a public consultation, the final model for domestic and sexual violence and abuse (DSVA) services was presented to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the Cabinet in March 2021 prior to the launch of the procurement.

Notable developments and challenges:

Past Year

4. The LLR DSVA Recommissioning Group agreed a new Project Plan and Project Timescales to ensure new contracts will be in place for 1st April 2022. All project workstreams were completed on time. The Invitation To Tender (ITT) was launched in May 2021 and closed in July 2021.
5. The procurement consisted of 5 services;
 - a. Helpline and Engagement Service - an LLR-wide service with a single specification. The PCC led on procurement of this element. This service is responsible for assessment, referral to other parts of the service system relevant to needs identified, assertive engagement and support, and maintaining a case management system.

- b. Domestic abuse locality support service – 2 Lots (Lot 1 – Leicestershire and Rutland, Lot 2 – Leicester City) with a single specification. Leicestershire County Council led on procurement of this element. This service will provide more intensive and specialist support tailored to individual need and will include support throughout the criminal/civil justice system.
 - c. Sexual violence support service – an LLR-wide service with a single specification. The PCC led on procurement of this element. This service will provide more intensive and specialist support tailored to individual need and will include support throughout the criminal justice system.
 - d. Domestic abuse accommodation related support service – 2 Lots (Lot 1 – Leicestershire, Lot 2 – Leicester City) with separate specifications and procurement leads. This service will provide a variety of accommodation for victims without safe housing, and intensive on-site support to maintain safety, and enable move-on.
 - e. Domestic violence and abuse Perpetrator Interventions – a single lot. Leicester City Council led on procurement of this element. This service will deliver short-term and longer-term programmes with perpetrators to address abusive behaviour. Leicestershire County Council will not currently contribute to this service but will spot purchase capacity, as required.
6. Additional funding from central government was announced for all local authorities for 2021/22 around the same time as the DSVA services procurement was launched. The timing and uncertainties of future funding from central government meant it was not possible to include any additional funding into the current procurement.
7. Following evaluation of each bid submitted for each service and following a moderation meeting between all commissioning partners, the successful bidders have now received their Notification of Award. This is as follows;
- a. Helpline and Engagement Service – FreeVA (Free from Violence + Abuse)
 - b. Domestic Abuse Locality Support Service – County/Rutland – LWA (Living Without Abuse). City – LWA
 - c. Sexual Violence Support Service – FreeVA
 - d. Domestic Abuse Accommodation Related Support Service – County – WALL (Womens Aid Leicestershire Limited). City – WALL and Panahghar

- e. Domestic violence and abuse Perpetrator Interventions – FreeVA

Coming Year

8. The project has now moved into the Implementation Phase and between mid-Nov and end of March commissioning partners will be working individually with the successful bidders to ensure they are ready to commence services from 1st April 2022. In addition to the individual meetings there is a timetable of regular Service System meetings where all commissioning partners and successful provider organisations meet to ensure that mobilisation of the overall DSVa Service System is working effectively across LLR and any potential risks and issues are resolved.
9. As all successful provider organisations are local providers of current services under the consortia UAVA (United Against Violence and Abuse), it is expected that the 5 month Implementation Phase is sufficient to address and resolve any potential issues and risks.

Key issues

10. Additional funding for domestic abuse accommodation related support was announced by central government at the time when the DSVa services procurement was launched. This came with the requirement to undertake a domestic abuse needs assessment, and to develop a Domestic Abuse Strategy. This will require close links between Public Health and Community Safety partners to ensure delivery of the priorities identified within the Domestic Abuse Strategy, and to meet the evidenced need for domestic abuse accommodation support, ensuring that the commissioned services have sufficient resources to meet that need.

Recommendations for the Board

11. The Board is asked to note that the re-procurement stage of DSVa services for Leicestershire has been completed, and that the DSVa Procurement Project has now moved into the Implementation Phase in preparation for the contract start date of 1st April 2022.

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