



**LEICESTERSHIRE DOMESTIC ABUSE LOCAL PARTNERSHIP
BOARD**

18th MARCH 2022

**DEPARTMENT FOR LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES
DOMESTIC ABUSE ACT FUNDING SPEND PLAN**

Introduction

1. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a number of statutory duties on the County Council primarily to provide accommodation based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children.
2. This will be achieved through the requirement to undertake a needs assessment, publish a Domestic Abuse Strategy and establish a Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board. The Department of Levelling Up Communities and Housing (DLUCH) has allocated funding to each local authority to assist in discharging the duties.

Background

3. The Domestic Abuse Act received royal assent in April 2021. The Act places a duty on tier one local authorities (the County Council) to provide accommodation based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation and provides clarity over governance and accountability, requiring tier two councils (district councils), to co-operate with the lead local authority.
4. In line with the Domestic Abuse Act, the County Council is also required to produce a Domestic Abuse Reduction Strategy which sets out a partnership approach to tackling Domestic Abuse (DA).
5. The duty on the County Council is to prepare, give effect to and monitor a strategy based on an assessment of the need for accommodation-based support for victims of domestic abuse in the Council's area.
6. To help deliver the Strategy, a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board must also be established, consisting of key partners with an interest in tackling domestic abuse and supporting victims and their children.

7. Funding by way of a three-year grant has been allocated by DLUHC. The County Council received £1,127,205 in year one (2021/22), whilst each district council received approximately £33,000. The funding allocated to the County Council will form part of the Children and Family Services directorate budget overseen by the Director of Children and Family Services and the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board will monitor outcomes against the use of these funds.

Needs Assessment

8. A Strategic Needs Assessment has been undertaken to assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support across Leicestershire for all victims. The national DA charity SafeLives assisted with this Needs Assessment.
9. Key points from the Needs Assessment have been included in the Strategy to evidence need:
- 98,350 adults in Leicestershire have experienced Domestic Abuse at some point in their lives since the age of 16 with approximately 15% experiencing both partner and family abuse.
 - 28,360 adult victims have experienced Domestic Abuse in the last year with approximately 8% experiencing both partner and family abuse.
 - The overall number of victims has increased year on year, with a 4.9% increase in 19/20 and 7.6% increase in 20/21 on the previous year.
 - Victims being assessed by the County Council's Children's Social Care (CSC) service increased by 218% (this can be attributed to a change in practice by the CSC assessment team to 'including other children in the family' as part of case management records). This is welcomed and puts the County Council in good stead to ensure the gathering of information in response to the DA Act 2021 S.3(181) - "*Children and young people are deemed to be victims under the 2021 Act as a result of seeing, hearing or otherwise experiencing domestic abuse between two people where the child is related to at least one of them whether that be the victim or perpetrator*"
 - Victims accessing DA support outreach services Increased by 5.3%
10. The Needs Assessment has informed the development of the Strategy with regard to the provision of support to cover Leicestershire and will inform commissioning / de-commissioning decisions.

Domestic Abuse Reduction Strategy

11. The DA Reduction Strategy outlines how the County Council will support victims of DA and how it will fulfil its safe accommodation duty as set out in the DA Act 2021. The Strategy has been informed by the Needs Assessment and will be implemented through commissioning the £1,127,205 DLUHC allocation.
12. The Leicestershire DA Reduction Strategy 2022 – 2024 has five priorities:

- i. Early Intervention and Prevention
 - ii. Targeted Support
 - iii. Reachable Services
 - iv. DA Act (Part 4) - Safe Accommodation
 - v. Strong Partnerships
13. As part of the development of the final Strategy a full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) has been undertaken to identify equality and human rights issues that needed to be incorporated into the final Strategy. The findings from the EHRIA have been embedded in the Strategy's subsequent implementation plan and will be regularly reviewed as part of the performance monitoring arrangements
14. A Delivery Plan has been developed to deliver the Strategy. Progress against the Delivery Plan will be monitored by the Director of Children and Family Services, the Family Services DA Strategic Group, Chaired by the Assistant Director for Targeted Early Help and Social Care and the DA Local Partnership Board. Progress information will also be shared with partners and key stakeholders to ensure alignment across the system.

Funding

15. Funding by way of a three-year grant has been allocated by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Of this the County Council has received £1,127,205 for 2021/22 with a further (approx) £33,000 being allocated to each district. This funding allocated to the County Council, will form part of the Children and Family Services directorate budget overseen by the Director of Children and Family Services and the DA Local Partnership Board will monitor outcomes against the use of these funds.
16. Tier one authorities have now been informed as to the amount of grant funding to be received for year two; Leicestershire County Council has been allocated £1,130,326. Tier two authorities have been allocated: Blaby £33,318; Charnwood £32,322; Harborough £33,576; Hinckley and Bosworth £32,757; Melton £32,364; North West Leicestershire £32,598; Oadby and Wigston £32,328.
17. A spend plan has been developed alongside the new Strategy and this will outline how the County Council funding will be allocated to the specific requirements of the new duties. (Appendix 1)
18. The services to be commissioned include therapeutic, specialist and advocacy support services as per the grant conditions and not for accommodation itself (which would create a longer-term funding risk).

Approach

19. A collaborative approach has been taken with this work to ensure alignment across the system. A Leicestershire DA Act and Funding Group has been established in April 2021, which initially had open and closed sessions to

enable commissioning discussions. Membership includes district and borough councils, police, health, Public Health and the voluntary sector.

20. Leicestershire County Council's DA Strategic Group, Chaired by the Assistant Director for Targeted Early Help and Social Care has been meeting monthly in order to drive this work forward within DLUHC specified timescales.

Conclusion

21. Robust Monitoring and evaluation processes are being established within all commissioning arrangement in order to inform future decision making across the system. Data will be used to identify any patterns, changes or gaps and presented to the Board at every meeting.
22. Work has commenced on the spend plan for year 2 (2022/23) and progress on this will be brought to the next Board.

Recommendations

23. It is recommended that:

- (a) The Board notes the content of this report;
- (b) The Board approves the spend plan attached at appendix A.

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Appendix

DLUHC Domestic Abuse Act Funding Plan 2021/22