

BRIEFING PAPER FOR IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMITTEE

1.	Date of meeting:	12th December 2017
2.	Title:	Domestic Abuse Update
3.	Directorate:	Regeneration and Environment

1. Background

1.1. Domestic abuse remains a key priority for the Council and its partners, through the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP). This report follows a previous report, made to Improving Lives Select Committee (ILSC) on the 25th July 2017.

1.2 Within this meeting, a number of recommendations were made, as follows;

- That an update be provided to the Select Commission in 6 months to include:-
 - Information about how the voice of the victim was captured in the Strategy
 - Outcomes of the peer review
 - Details of the perpetrator programme.
- That further consideration be given to investment in women's empowerment and preventative work in school as part of the Strategy's development.
- That an update be provided outlining progress in addressing the recommendations of the PEEL review in relation to South Yorkshire Police's response to domestic abuse.
- That the Strategy be circulated on completion to the Select Commission prior to the six month's update.
- That information be provided on the level of incidents/reports over Christmas period.

2. Voice of the Victim

2.1 The SRP Domestic Abuse Strategy has been officially signed off by members of the Board and is now operational. Members of this committee, through the recommendations made, were keen to ensure that victim's experiences were captured within the strategy. Whilst the strategy is built on learning from case analysis and informed by a range of agencies working directly with victims, the strategy recognises the need to do more and members will note the specific aim within the strategy, attached as appendix A, to *'Identify lessons, listen to victims, promote challenge and respond as a partnership.'*

- 2.2** In terms of general engagement regarding the strategy, officers are working with third sector partners to identify service user/victim support groups etc to consult on the implementation of the strategy. The learning from these events will be used to further inform the delivery plan.
- 2.3** Members will note from the newly developed delivery plan, attached as appendix B, that significant attention is given to engaging with service users and understanding/impacting satisfaction. The Domestic Abuse Priority Group (DAPG) is currently gathering satisfaction data from across the various agencies who deliver DA services. Not only will this provide us with a consistent measure of DA satisfaction across the board but will also highlight parts of the system where further work may be required. Additional to this, the group are also implementing a quality assurance framework. This will focus on both case review and service user engagement.

3. Peer Review

- 3.1** As with the above recommendation, this update is due in February 2018 however, the following is provided by way of an interim update. A new peer review partner (Bradford City Council) has been identified and the detailed scope of the review has been agreed by the Safer Rotherham Partnership Board, at its meeting on the 4th December 2017. The review will focus on the following areas
- Strategic Focus
 - Governance
 - Service Delivery
 - Partnership Engagement
 - Commissioning
 - Operational oversight
- 3.2** The review process will be to first hold a self assessment period, during which the Safer Rotherham Partnership will be required to identify various pieces of evidence or practice that support its commitment to delivery against specified areas. The team at Bradford, which will be a multi-agency team, will review the evidence submitted and identify key areas they wish to explore or parts of practice they wish to witness. These lines of enquiry will form the basis of the assessment day, where a multi-skilled team from Bradford agencies will attend Rotherham and speak to key individuals and review paperwork/processes.
- 3.3** It should also be noted that this peer review is understood to be the first of its nature, with a specific focus on Domestic Abuse. This has attracted the support of the Association of Directors of Childrens Services and allows the Council to develop a bespoke scope and assessment framework.

4. Perpetrator Programme

4.1 Funding has been secured from both the SRP and the Councils Housing Department, totalling £50,000, to meet Rotherham's costs in relation to a county-wide perpetrator programme. During the approval process, the SRP Board considered evidence from various sources including pan-European, through the the International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology and from UK based sources such as Project Mirabal (a five year research project) and Respect UK. The procurement of this service is being led by Doncaster Borough Council and the tender process has commenced. In summary, the programme will have the following aims

- Address and change abusive behaviour at earliest possible point.
- To provide, within a single contract, targeted multi-component interventions ranging from prevention and early intervention work (for low levels of abusive behaviour such as non-violent aggression and controlling behaviour) right through to engaging with perpetrators who have patterns of repeat offending, including high risk cases.
- Demonstrate fair access to diverse communities.
- Build capacity and capability through provision of train the trainer training to ensure staff in all agencies are skilled to identify, challenge and address abusive behaviour at an early stage.
- Numbers of referrals, contacts, service users etc. not yet confirmed as the development of the Invitation to Tender and service specification is part of the project.

4.2 Whilst the process is progressing well, the service is now not anticipated to commence until March 2018. With varying views expressed within the partnership about the efficacy of programmes of this nature, the partnership is keen to closely monitor delivery within Rotherham to ensure that value for money is secured and that the programme makes a real difference.

5. Women's Empowerment/Education

5.1 Women's empowerment, positive role models and the benefits of education are all clearly recognised within the strategy and again, this results in a specific aim: *'Focus on the provision of services that support positive relationships through early identification of need and addressing conflict before abusive situations occur and impact negatively across communities.'*

5.2 Within the action plan, this aim ensures targeted action and in particular, the group will be focussing on the following;

- Identifying girls/women's groups and signposting
- Supporting the development of girls groups
- Identifying positive role models and finding an appropriate role
- Mapping community assets/identifying gaps
- Mapping education provision both within and outside of formal education settings

6. PEEL Review

6.1 The DA priority group has also given greater focus to understanding the actions of South Yorkshire Police (SYP) in response to the PEEL inspection, conducted in November 2016. The SRP has received reassurance about the actions taken by SYP since this time. The key actions include

- Increasing training for officers (both general and specialist)
- Training has been provided around civil orders re DA
- A revised process for supervision/monitoring of DA investigations
- Superintendent, through Daily Management Meetings, provides clear focus on domestic abuse
- Work across all types of crime to enhance victim care on offer
- Revised processes to ensure quick and regular contact alongside ensuring appropriate support is provided

6.2 Future actions relating directly to policing will focus on developing a menu of tactics/disposals to act as a guide for officers. The group have ambitions to develop this as a partnership document. This will assist in enhancing use of tools and powers across the partnership.

6.3 SYP have been reinspected, towards the end of October 2017. Whilst there is no detail available until the reports are published, SYP are hoping to have it confirmed that a number of recommendations have been addressed. The SRP has established a mechanism to ensure that information is fed in to the partnership, following publication and any issues that arise are addressed within this setting.

7. Peak Period Action

7.1 The partnership is focussing on two separate strands in relation to any potential periods in which we may experience a spike, though the evidence in relation to periodic spikes can often be conflicting.

7.2 In terms of public awareness and positive messages, the partnership are seeking to identify and support existing national campaigns. Alongside this, the partnership will seek to develop some single messages that can be shared and promoted by all.

7.3 Partners are also looking at their own response provision throughout peak periods and in particular, SYP will seek to provide specific resources for these types of incidents throughout peak periods. At its meeting on the 4th December 2017, the Safer Rotherham Partnership considered funding, through underspends, additional resource from South Yorkshire Police in order to provide targeted patrols over the Christmas period, with visits to known victims of domestic abuse, in partnership with Rotherham Rise. A decision with regards to this and other projects will be made within the coming weeks.

7.4 In terms of the data, there has not been any spike over the previous two years in relation to either incidents or crime. Additionally, the repeat victimisation rate has stayed stable through this period. It should be noted that quarter two and three generally show slightly higher level of DA incidents than other quarters.

8. Additional Action

8.1 Alongside the above, a number of other tasks have been prioritised through the scheduling of completion within the action plan. Some tasks have also been given such priority that the group felt delivery in these areas should be monitored within the performance section of the plan. This means that progress in relation to these tasks will receive close scrutiny, alongside traditional performance measures. These tasks are as follows (some of which are aimed at providing the performance measures the group felt were necessary but may not yet exist)

- Delivery of a perpetrator programme within Rotherham for those who have not been convicted of an offence but whose behaviour may present some level of risk (as mentioned above)
- Develop consistent data within agencies in relation to disclosure regarding DA and completion of Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) assessments, in order that it be combined to provide an accurate picture for Rotherham
- The mapping of the provision of DA delivery in schools and education settings
- A re-designed pathway within RMBC
- The mapping of referral sources to Rotherham Rise (RMBC commissioned service)

8.2 As can be noted within the plan, each objective is supported by performance indicators to allow the partnership to effectively monitor its objectives. Additional scrutiny is also delivered by the Council by way of a domestic abuse indicator within the performance framework, which is monitored quarterly by Members.

8.3 A number of actions are noted as complete or on target (green), as follows

- Perpetrator programme
- Re-designed pathway within RMBC
- Increased training for Police re DA
- Revised process for monitoring incidents/investigation of DA (SYP)
- Identifying a calendar of campaigns and shared messages
- An agreed ambition to identify positive role models within communities
- An agreement to look at how the DAPG can review and influence the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process, alongside performance monitoring
- Revised Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) protocol
- Implementation of a 'near-miss' review protocol
- Development of a protocol to share lessons learned in the various review panels

8.4 Whilst the partnership recognise that progress needs to be swift in this area and that some actions have been discussed for some time, it was agreed that revised timescales would be provided and the action plan refreshed in line with the spirit of the revised strategy. Generally where actions are marked amber, this is due to their planned completion being at a later date however, the entire plan will be continuously reviewed to ensure progress is timely. It has been made clear that progress will be closely monitored on a monthly basis and that lead officers would be held accountable for actions. The items currently marked in amber are due to the lead not yet being confirmed or the milestones not yet defined clearly.

9. Key Risks

9.1. Whilst the backlog of victims awaiting support within commissioned services has gone, this is still recognised as a key risk by partners and work continues to monitor the impact of the changes within the structure of these services. Additional to this monitoring, the DA coordinator is also exploring opportunities with partner agencies, such as victim support, to bolster the services on offer. The backlog has reduced from around 160 in July 2017.

9.2. The latest performance report presented to the SRP board showed decreasing outcomes as a percentage of recorded DA crime. This is in part due to the changes to crime recording standards, which has seen a rise in recorded crime but not a correlating rise in incidents reported. This demonstrates that proportionally more incidents are turning in to crimes, which can be seen as positive and is furthermore a contributing factor to some of the fluctuations in outcome rates. Partners and colleagues within the Police recognise the shared responsibility to work towards improving these figures and the action plan supports this work. An extract from the performance report is below;

Table 4: Domestic Abuse				
	Rolling 12-Month Comparison			Year to Date (YTD)
	12 months to 31st October 2016	12 months to 31st October 2017	% Change	Apr - Oct 2017
Domestic Crimes	1,902	3,179	67%	2,027
Outcome Rate	29%	19%	-10%	18%
No. of referrals to the MARAC	527	470	-11%	277
Repeat cases heard at the MARAC	188	163	-13%	103
Proportion of cases heard at the MARAC that are repeats	36%	35%	-1%	37%
Satisfaction Rate (DA Victim Satisfaction Survey)	82%	74%	-8%	71%
	April 2015 to March 2016	April 2016 to March 2017	% Change	Apr - Sept 2017
Rotherham Rise Outcomes: People at risk of domestic abuse, who are given successful support to: a) Avoid or manage harm from others b) Maintain accommodation c) Secure accommodation (RMBC)	Data not provided	a) 96% b) 100% c) 78%	-	a) 100% b) 100% c) 63%

9.3. Within the revised plan, the Domestic Abuse Priority Group (DAPG) has identified the need to ensure strict oversight of the delivery of recommendations as a result of DHRs. The group will also continue to learn lessons through the newly implemented 'Near-Miss Protocol' alongside its own quality assurance processes, which is reviewing live cases on a themed basis.

10. Recommendations for ILSC

10.1. That the Committee contribute to the Peer Review, if required by the Assessment Team.

10.2. It is recognised that there is much more to do and this is a key priority for the Council and its partner's and whilst progress continues to be made, the committee requests regular updates on progress to be provided.

11. Name and contact details

Cllr Emma Hoddinott, Chair, Safer Rotherham Partnership
Sam Barstow, Head of Community Safety, Resilience and Emergency Planning
Sue Wynne, Chief Executive, Rotherham Rise
Supt Rebecca Chapman, South Yorkshire Police