

BRIEFING PAPER

1.	Title:	REVIEW OF DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES, ENGAGEMENT PLAN
2.	Directorate:	Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Domestic Abuse can affect a wide range of people; families – including children and young people, older people and those who depend on their partner for care and support, survivors from BMER and LGBT Communities and also parents/carers who suffer abuse from adolescents in the home.
- 1.2 Within Rotherham, the Council currently commissions specialist domestic abuse services delivered by the Voluntary Sector. The Council also delivers in-house services such as the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) Service, and a housing based service that focuses on making sure Survivors and their families live in safe, secure properties.
- 1.3 The Domestic Abuse Partnership strategy, led by the Safer Rotherham Partnership, was agreed in December 2017. One of the gaps identified by the strategy was:

Pathways for those adults affected by domestic abuse are duplicative and confused and this makes sharing information and the provision of coordinated, timely support a challenge. The pathway must be accessible for all.

This led to the following aim being agreed and captured within the strategy:

Review the system and redesign the adult pathway, replicating best practice

- 1.4 In July 2018 a paper presented by the Head of Community Safety, was approved by Adult Care, Housing and Public Health (ACHPH). The key recommendation within this report was that Commissioning Managers and Officers from Children's and Young Person's Services (CYPS) and ACHPH, alongside the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator, carried out a full review of commissioned and non-commissioned domestic abuse services in the borough.
- 1.5 This internal document sets out the approach RMBC will adopt to engage Rotherham's citizens and communities to the development of a needs

analysis for Survivors of Domestic Abuse and their families. It includes engagement with:

- Survivors of domestic abuse who have accessed a service(s)
- Survivors and the wider Rotherham citizens population who may not have accessed a service
- professionals from agencies and organisations working with survivors (external and internal)

- 1.6 A Co production kick start session was hosted by Commissioners in early July where agencies who worked with survivors of domestic abuse were represented. This session was to help Commissioners develop a co-production plan on how we will interact with communities, service users and organisations going forward.
- 1.7 It is imperative that appropriate methods of engagement are defined and adopted so that there is good coordination and the engagement which supports the Commissioners commitment to co-producing services for the future.
- 1.8 Advice has been sought from the Councils Communications Team around how to best promote engagement which includes use of a press release, website and social media with links back to a survey as well as communications to survivors, partners/stakeholders using key messages. A Communication plan will be developed and agreed in due course, with the approval of the DA lead and Cabinet Member with responsibility.
- 1.9 Alongside the engagement strategy, a comprehensive benchmarking exercise will be undertaken alongside a review of available data. This will inform an overarching Needs Analysis, which may identify the need for changes to the current service offer. If this is a significant change then a further period of consultation will be required to determine the impact of any changes prior to decision-making. If this is the case a separate Communications Plan will be developed.
- 1.10 The plan will be to produce an analysis report with recommendations by December 2018. This will be presented through the structure of the Community Safety Partnership, before final consideration by the Council's Cabinet.

2. How is the Needs Analysis Informed

- 1.11 In order to inform the needs analysis and subsequent decision making, the partnership is seeking to understand how the current Domestic Abuse pathway in Rotherham meets the needs of Survivors and their families. As well as understanding customer journey and experiences. This will include commissioned services delivered externally and the Council's Independent Domestic Violence Advocate service (IDVAS). It will also encompass the services that are available for children and young people in the borough

who have been affected by domestic abuse. The review will take a whole family approach looking at the impact across relationships and age ranges. It will also look across the risk spectrum from prevention, identification and early intervention through to medium and high needs.

3. Outcomes

1.12 There are a range of outcomes sought as a result of the process of engagement and needs analysis, these are as follows

- The views of survivors and their families are heard and understood.
- An understanding on what is felt are the important elements to consider in the future service design and Pathway - “what good looks like”
- Minority and vulnerable groups are engaged appropriately so that their views are heard and understood.
- The views of the Rotherham people have had an opportunity to contribute their ideas and thoughts.
- Partner agencies, currently commissioned services and the front line staff have been engaged and contributed towards the review
- To be able to make commissioning recommendations to the DARG
- To procure a co –produced service that meets the needs of the Rotherham people.

1.13 The service design will take into account best practise and look at what is working well in other local authorities through a benchmarking process, which is currently underway.

4. Key Engagement Questions

1.14 The key engagement questions have been developed by RMBC Adult Care, Children’s Commissioning and the Domestic Abuse Coordinator and shared and reviewed by service users who are either in receipt of support from a Domestic Abuse Service or have recently accessed Domestic Abuse Services. The survey is now live on the following link https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200036/domestic_violence/1305/domestic_abuse_services_public_survey_2018

5. Methods of Engagement

1.15 The same engagement questions will be used to gather and listen to views in a variety of ways, through both online and direct consultation.

1.16 The Council’s commissioned Housing Related Support for Domestic Abuse, delivered by Rotherham Rise, will help facilitate a face to face engagement activity with existing and former service users.

- 1.17 Children's and Adults Commissioning Team will offer face to face or telephone opportunities to discuss views and experience should this be requested.
- 1.18 The IDVAS team have explained that due to the nature of where their service users are, dealing with high risk a face to face engagement is unlikely to attract interest. However it is encouraging to hear that telephone engagement is a possible option, which we intend to test.
- 1.19 The Council's online survey will facilitate an easy completion of the survey. It will reach out to people who may not necessarily be in existing services or in touch with services. The promotion of the survey will be targeted at known services who work with people affected by domestic abuse to enable further encouragement and participation. A paper version of the survey will be available to facilitate face to face engagement.
- 1.20 Anyone who may be experiencing domestic abuse and not accessing services will be reminded of how they can do this.
- 1.21 A survey monkey for Stakeholders and agencies will be created to allow easy completion. A paper version of the survey will be available to facilitate face to face engagement. This will be sent electronically to a wide range of partners.
- 1.22 In addition, open letters/emails will also be welcomed from people who wish to express their view, thoughts and ideas in a different way.
- 1.23 RMBC will issue a press release working with partners Domestic Abuse Partnership Commissioners to raise awareness and promote the survey.
- 1.24 The opportunity to share views will be promoted through wider distribution of the survey by:
- All Adult Housing Related Support Services
 - Adults Commissioning News Bulletin
 - Provider forums
 - Partners of the Domestic Abuse Priority Group
 - Social Care and Early Help Practitioners
 - School Heads and Safeguarding leads
 - Members of key steering groups eg LSCB and the Safer Rotherham Partnership
 - Councillors
 - RMBC website
- 1.25 It will also be distributed to the wider RMBC workforce , NHS staff including The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust (TRFT), Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS foundation trust (RDASH) and the

Clinical Commissioning Group. As large local employers it is likely that some employees will also be victims and survivors and internal communications will therefore be utilised.

1.26 In addition group engagement will also be organised by Adult and CYP's Commissioning

- Survivors of domestic abuse : Rotherham Rise, Apnahaq, Grow, Rothacs and IDVAS
- the voluntary sector via the VAR news bulletin and possibly utilising the GISMO website

1.27 Results of the findings will be published once formal approval has been agreed.

6. Timescales

Start of Engagement Period	Mid/End Sept 2018
End of Engagement	End October
Analysis of Engagement	End Nov 2018

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