

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE	31 st January 2022
REPORT OF	Joanne Hewson, Deputy Chief Executive & Executive Director of Children Services, People, Health & Care
SUBJECT	Overview of the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24 and Local Approach
STATUS	OPEN

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIM

The development of a revised strategic approach to domestic abuse and the delivery of a programme of work, with an effective use of resources, supports and contributes directly to the Council Plan aims of Stronger Economy & Stronger Communities. "Reducing Domestic Abuse rates" is also a key indicator to measure progress on the Council outcome that "all residents in North East Lincolnshire feel safe and are safe".

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Domestic abuse remains a priority for North East Lincolnshire. This report gives an update around the ongoing work to tackle domestic abuse across the borough and details the progress to embed the partnership Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024.

The report also contains statistical information on performance and includes information around current service provision and programmes in place to support victims of domestic abuse, as well as future commissioning.

MATTER(S) FOR CONSIDERATION

- The Committee is asked to note the current position and progress made to develop and deliver a new Domestic Abuse Strategy for 2021-2024 and embed a partnership approach to tackling domestic abuse.
- The Committee is asked to note the current position and progress made towards meeting the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and in particular meeting the new duty it has introduced on local authorities to provide support for victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation.
- The Committee is asked to make any recommendations that can be forwarded to the Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP), Safeguarding Adult's Board (SAB) and Community Safety Partnership for collective consideration.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1 **Partnership Working Arrangements & Governance** – Domestic Abuse remains a high priority for North East Lincolnshire and there continues to be a wide range of partnership activity taking place coordinated through the Domestic

Abuse Strategy Delivery Group which meets monthly and is accountable to the wider Tri-Board arrangements which incorporates the Community Safety Partnership, Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children Partnership.

1.2 **Domestic Abuse Strategy** – The local approach to tackling incidence of domestic abuse is approach is underpinned by the *Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024*. The strategy is focused around the following areas:

- **PREVENT** – *Cultivating an environment that prevents domestic abuse and brings about a continual reduction in incidents across North East Lincolnshire, by raising awareness of what constitutes an abusive relationship, encouraging victims to report earlier, and tackling the culture of acceptance.*
- **PROTECT & PROVIDE** – *Nurturing an environment where high quality, wide-ranging support services are accessible, as well as operationally and financially sustainable, in order to protect and provide for victims and their families on their journey to recovery.*
- **PURSUE** – *Deploying the full weight of the criminal justice system to bring perpetrators swiftly to justice, whilst also offering opportunities to those who want to change their behaviour.*

1.3 **Strategic Aims**

1.4 The focus of the aims under the ‘*Prevent*’ theme are around raising awareness of domestic abuse across the borough, ensuring support is provided to all victims of domestic abuse including male victims and those experiencing so-called honour-based abuse, focusing on preventative measures, and changing attitudes by promoting healthy relationships in children and young people. There is also a focus on the workforce in terms of raising their skills and confidence whilst also promoting the use of ‘professional curiosity’. Other aims include reviewing existing performance measures to better measure success and ensuring the adoption of an informed approach to commissioning services.

1.5 The focus of the aims under the ‘*Protect and Provide*’ theme are around providing support tailored to the needs of the victim, with a strong emphasis on the availability of housing-relating support, providing earlier help to prevent escalating levels of domestic abuse and ensuring that victims and their families continue to be consulted on service provision. There is also a focus on strengthening MARAC arrangements for high-risk victims and strengthening the link to the mental health and substance misuse agendas to ensure all the needs of the victim are met.

1.6 The focus of the aims under the ‘*Pursue*’ theme are around supporting victims to participate safely in relevant criminal proceeding and pursuing victimless prosecutions where the victim is unable to support it and engaging with the CPS and Police Scrutiny panels to highlight issues experienced by victims. There is also a focus on ensuring perpetrators continue to engage in the MATAC process, a commitment to explore opportunities to provide a non-convicted perpetrator programme, ensuring wrap around support is provided to the victim and family where any work is undertaken with the perpetrator.

1.7 **Progress Against the Strategy**

- 1.8 Since the new Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24 was agreed and published in May 2021, much progress has been made to begin implementing the strategic aims. This progress is captured in the Domestic Abuse Delivery Plan overseen by the Domestic Abuse Strategy Delivery Group. One of the key areas identified as part of the strategy development was the need to bolster resources. This has resulted in some existing resources being secured on a permanent basis and a range of additional resources developed as follows:-
- 1.9 ***Domestic Abuse Coordinator*** – This post has been secured on an ongoing, permanent basis.
- 1.10 ***High Risk IDVA Provision*** - Long term sustainable funding has been secured for 3 x FTE IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocates) posts supporting victims aged 16 and over at high risk of domestic abuse. Additional funding for 2 years has been secured from the Ministry of Justice via the Office of Police and Crime Commission for a further 2 x FTE IDVA posts. This takes total high risk IDVA provision in NEL up to 5 x FTE posts for at least the next 2 years and is much more in line with recommended levels as per Safelives guidance.
- 1.11 ***Target Hardening*** – Service provision has been secured with dedicated, long-term funding in place to offer target hardening to strengthen security in victims' homes, meaning they receive the service as a priority.
- 1.12 ***MARAC Coordination*** – The MARAC Coordinator post has been secured on an ongoing basis. This post is responsible for processing referrals, creating the meeting agendas, minuting the case notes and actions from each case heard, delivering MARAC and DASH Risk assessment training and other duties to support the coordination of the MARAC process.
- 1.13 ***Who's In Charge?*** – Commissioned by the Police & Crime Commissioner for the next 2 years, this programme aims to tackle domestic abuse perpetrated by children and young people in the home and provides support to families.
- 1.14 ***Children's Services Training to work with perpetrators of domestic abuse*** – A Humberside-wide initiative coordinated by the Police & Crime Commissioner has also been secured which will enable practitioners to be trained on how to work with perpetrators of domestic abuse where it is safe and appropriate to do so. It is aimed at increasing the skills, knowledge, and confidence of practitioners to work with perpetrators at the lower levels of risk where there is some willingness on the part of the perpetrator to engage. Two levels of training have been procured including a basic level and more advance training, along with train the trainer training. A number of staff have been identified to take part with training planned up to April 2022.
- 1.15 ***Joint Commissioning Arrangements*** – A joint commissioning approach has been agreed as part of the development of the new Strategy. This is backed by longer-term funding secured through commitment from partner agencies and long-term grant funding including the new Safe Accommodation Duty allocation and long-standing Housing Related Support grant funding.

- 1.16 ***Dedicated Early Help Provision of Domestic Abuse*** – A wide range of activities are taking place in respect of Early Help provision for domestic abuse, including the creation of a dedicated domestic abuse team as well as increased use of specific programmes and packages of work around domestic abuse which practitioners are already trained in.
- 1.17 ***Strategic Lead Safeguarding & Partnerships*** – A new post has been established and is in place established, providing additional strategic support for the domestic abuse agenda.
- 1.18 ***Domestic Abuse Analyst*** – A new post had been established for an initial 1-year period to provide additional, dedicated capacity regarding performance and analysis to better understand impact.
- 1.19 ***Communication, Marketing and Engagement Officer*** – A post is also being established to provide additional capacity for domestic abuse communications, marketing and insights.
- 1.20 ***DART*** – Social Care staff have been trained to deliver the Domestic Abuse Recovering Together (DART Programme) – an additional 11 social care staff were trained in August 21 to deliver DART to support children at Child in Need and Child Protection.
- 1.21 ***DASH*** – Social Care Staff continue to be trained in DASH with is the nationally recognised domestic abuse risk assessment tool.
- 1.22 ***Operation Encompass*** – which informs Schools of overnight/weekend domestic abuse incidents to support children is now embedded.
- 1.23 ***Screening*** – Daily domestic abuse screening has been implemented at the Integrated Front Door within Children Services.
- 1.24 ***MARAC*** – Robust Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) arrangements continue to be in place, helping keep high risk domestic abuse victims and their children safe.
- 1.25 ***Healthy Relationships*** – Development of a youth-led healthy relationships campaign, which aims to develop range of campaign materials/assets for use in a variety of settings, via the of a Together for Childhood programme.
- 1.26 ***Areas for Further Development***
- 1.27 It is recognised that despite the improvements made to service provision listed above, there are still a number of areas that require strengthening which are currently being addressed which include:-
- 1.28 ***Sustained Awareness Raising*** – This will enable local communities to better understand domestic abuse and its impact, where to seek help from and messaging that reinforces that domestic abuse is not acceptable.

- 1.29 **Universal Training Offer** – Development of a universal approach to delivery of domestic abuse training and awareness in schools and wider education settings.
- 1.30 **Working with Perpetrators** – Further resources are required to tackle perpetrator behaviour to reduce risk to victims and their families and reduce offending behaviour and repeat victimisation.
- 1.31 **Commissioning** – Stronger strategic links with Mental Health and Substance Misuse in order to explore joint commissioning and service delivery opportunities.
- 1.32 **Lower Risk victims** – Greater support for lower-risk victims to prevent escalating levels of domestic abuse based on regional and national best practice examples.
- 1.33 **Insights** – Greater use of Public Health insights to inform service delivery.
- 1.34 **Professional Curiosity** – Increased use of ‘professional curiosity’ in all practitioners to encourage earlier identification or disclosure of domestic abuse.
- 1.35 **Victims Voices** – Greater focus on capturing the voice of the victim and child.
- 1.36 **DOMESTIC ABUSE PREVELANCE AND PERFORMANCE**
- 1.37 **Time it takes for victims to seek support**
- 1.38 The recording of the prevalence of domestic abuse is not straightforward. It is generally accepted that the number of incidents of domestic abuse is under-reported with national research indicating that it takes on average between 2 and a half to 3 years before a victim seeks support. Much emphasis is placed locally on victims having the confidence to report incidents and receive support earlier.
- 1.39 Whilst the below sample size is relatively small, the data below supplies by NEL Women’s Aid illustrates the local challenge faced in encouraging victims to come forward earlier.

Question Asked - How long has the abuse been going on?			
Time	Refuge	Outreach	Freedom Programme
Under 1 year	29 (31%)	9 (13%)	9 (10%)
2 – 5 years	27 (29%)	31 (46%)	20 (21%)
6 – 10 years	14 (15%)	15 (22%)	25 (27%)
11 – 15 years	4 (4.3%)	6 (8%)	39 (42%) for 11 + years
16 – 20 years	4 (4.3%)	3 (4%)	N/A
21+ years	11 (12%)	1 (<2%)	N/A

Note: Remaining % unknown.

1.40 Number of Incidents of Domestic Abuse

Incidents of Domestic Abuse Reported to Humberside Police				
2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
5,355	5,327	5,502	5026	4991

- 1.41 The number of domestic abuse incidents reported to Humberside Police is a key measure for determining the impact of domestic abuse. However, it must be noted that number of incidents reported is not necessarily indicative of prevalence. It does not represent the actual number of incidents taking place since many factors can affect the number of incidents reported.
- 1.42 Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a year-on year increase in recorded domestic abuse incidents. It was generally accepted that this was likely a result of an increase in the number of incidents being reported, rather than an increase in the number of incidents actually taking place. It was anticipated that the number of incidents of domestic abuse was likely to continue increasing for a period of time due to the strategies in place around social marketing, better services, and increased focus. It was hoped that in the long term the figures would begin to plateau and then reduce over time, as local strategies began to take effect.
- 1.43 The 20/21 data appears to show that the number of number of incidents being reported has plateaued when compared with the previous year's data, which would seem to support the above prediction. However, the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown restrictions have had a huge impact on both demand for services and service delivery across all agencies, including the way those affected by domestic abuse have been accessing services. Nationally, it was accepted that the prevalence of domestic abuse increased during the pandemic as victims were at home with their perpetrator. However, there were concerns regionally and locally that a reduction in the number of incidents being reported during the first part of lockdown was an indication of 'suppressed demand', and that victims were not accessing services.
- 1.44 Going forward, it important that a baseline is re-established, and that work continues to ensure that the number of incidents being reported reflects the actual number of incidents taking place as accurately as possible.
- #### 1.45 Number of Domestic Abuse Crimes
- 1.46 To put the Police data into context it is important to understand that not all domestic abuse incidents attended by the Police can be recorded as a crime. In addition, the Police will not arrest the offender in all cases. The offender may be interviewed on a voluntary basis, or the victim may not support a prosecution. Whilst there is the option in domestic abuse cases to take a case to court without the victims support these cases do require corroborative evidence.
- 1.47 Due to the dynamics involved between the victim and offender in domestic abuse cases, each case is reviewed and managed on a case-by-case basis. The Police

work closely with the Crown Prosecution Service to prosecute domestic abuse cases but there are evidential tests that are required to be met.

Domestic Abuse Crimes				
2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18 (April-Feb)	2016/17 (April-Feb)
3,410	3,355	3,432	2,162	1,977

- 1.48 The number of Domestic Abuse crimes is directly related to the number of incidents of Domestic Abuse. Crime statistics are dependent on, and therefore indicative of, the robustness of the Police and the Criminal Justice System. Over time, it is hoped that there is an increase in the proportion of incidents which go on to be managed as crimes and that the average number of incidents per crime is reduced. The current data shows:

Year	Incidents	Crimes	% crimes v incidents	Average incidents per crime
14/15	4,205	1,211	29%	3.5
15/16	4,614	1,633	35%	2.8
16/17 (April-Feb)	4,551	1,977	43	2.3
17/18 (April-Feb)	4,596	2,162	47	2
18/19	5,502	3,432	62%	1.6 (1.64)
19/20	5,327	3,355	63%	1.6 (1.59)
20/21	5,355	3,410	64%	1.6 (1.57)

- 1.49 The 2020/21 data demonstrates a continuing improvement in the rate of incidents being crimed, more than doubling since 14/15. This means that the average number of incidents per crime has more than halved, which is a huge improvement over a 7-year time period and indicative of the work that has been undertaken within Humberside Police. Work will continue to further increase the rate of incidents becoming crimes.
- 1.50 **Number of Children directly affected by Domestic Abuse who are supported**
- 1.51 **The number of referrals to CASS where the main category of referral is domestic abuse**
- 1.52 The below data has been collated since 2019 when the new Liquid Logic reporting system came into use. Due to recording limitations in the system, where the primary referral reason may not be flagged as domestic abuse, it has not been possible to determine how many referrals were made with domestic abuse as a secondary or contributing factor. This means that figures are likely to be

underreported and should not be seen as a true reflection of the extent and impact of domestic abuse within families across the borough. More recently some revisions have been to the system which should lead to more accurate levels of reporting moving forward.

- 1.53 Wider information from the Child Safeguarding & Reviewing Service indicates that 50% of children on a Child Protection Plan have domestic abuse as a primary concern.

Domestic Abuse Referrals to CASS		
2021 (Jan – Sept)	2020 (Calendar Year)	2019 (Calendar Year)
288	282	333

- 1.54 **Domestic abuse referrals to CASS as a percentage of total referrals**

Domestic Abuse Referrals at % of total referrals to CASS		
2021 (Jan – Sept)	2020 (Calendar Year)	2019 (Calendar Year)
13.6% (monthly average)	7.6% (monthly average)	10.25% (monthly average)

- 1.55 **Number of Operation Encompass disclosures made**

- 1.56 Operation Encompass was launched in May 2017. The process allows Humberside Police to inform schools that a domestic abuse incident took place in the family home with the child present the previous evening / weekend, giving the school context if a student is withdrawn or disrupted and allowing them to support the child with increased understanding.

- 1.57 While data is collected around the number of Operation Encompass disclosures made, data showing the outcomes of the support provided to the children is currently unavailable, making it difficult evaluate the effectiveness of the process, however it is accepted that this enables Schools to provide appropriate levels of support.

Operation Encompass Disclosures				
Q2 2021/22	Q1 2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
Currently unavailable	546	1,723	1,638	1,874

- 1.58 **Number of children living in households where there is a MARAC victim**

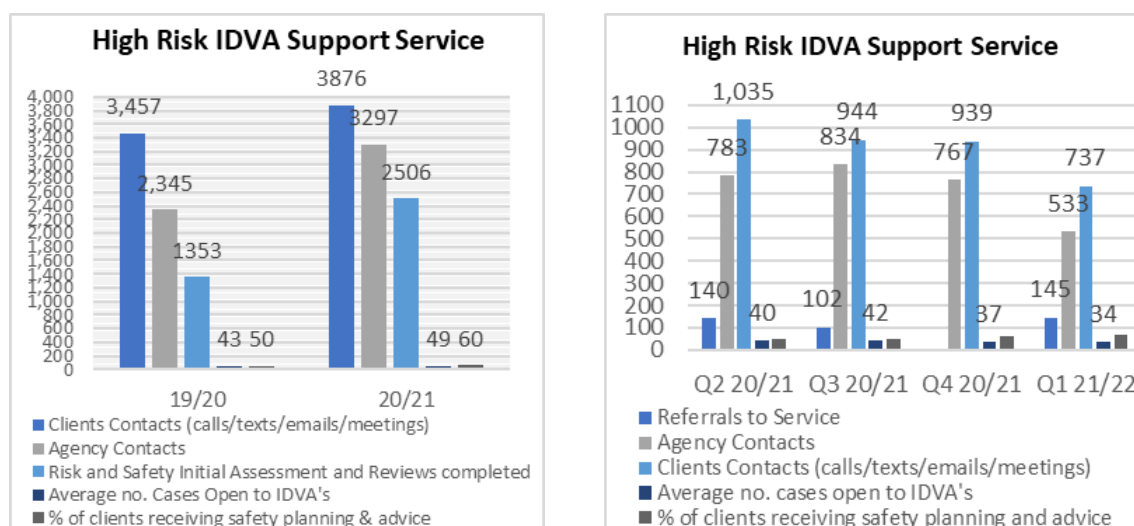
- 1.59 The total number of children living in household where there is a MARAC victim during 2020-21 was 877. The total number of MARAC cases discussed during the same period is 769. The data shows that when dealing with high-risk cases of domestic abuse there will inevitably be a significant number of children also impacted by domestic abuse, highlighting the need for the correct services to be

in place to support those children. What it does not show is what that support looks like and whether the provision is effective.

Children in MARAC Households								
Q2 2021 / 22	Q1 2021 / 22	2020 / 21	2019 / 20	2018 / 19	2017 / 18	2016 / 17	2015 / 16	2014 / 15
190	245	877	655	527	417	354	463	672

1.60 IDVA Support for victims at high risk of domestic abuse

1.61 IDVA support data provides information on how many referrals to the service were made, how many contacts were made with clients and also partner agencies working with the clients, engagement levels and completion of initial safety assessments and reviews. The below graphs provide a snapshot of the data available.



1.62 Percentage of MARAC repeats

1.63 The below table shows that the percentage of repeat victims being presented back to MARAC within a 12-month period has risen over the last four years, and particularly during 2020. This is partly due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic which saw an increase in the overall number of cases referred to MARAC. The frequency of meetings was increased to cope with the demand, and this has had a knock-on effect on the number of repeat cases heard.

1.64 It should be noted that a relatively minor incident can trigger a repeat referral and that an increase in repeat cases should not necessarily be seen as negative in terms of support for victims and it can show positive engagement with the relevant service(s) and that a victim has started reporting/disclosing. An audit or dip sample of MARAC repeat cases is planned by the MARAC Steering Group to gain a greater understanding into the reasons for repeat cases coming to MARAC.

MARAC Repeats – North East Lincolnshire								
Q2 2021 / 22	Q1 2021 / 22	2020 / 21	2019 / 20	2018 / 19	2017 / 18	2016 / 17	2015 / 16	2014 / 15
55%	51%	49%	43%	37%	35%	34%	43.2%	42.7%

MARAC Repeats – Regional & National Comparisons (Q2 2021/22)						
National Figure	Safelives Rec'd	Humberside Police Force	East Riding of Yorkshire	Hull	North East Lincs	North Lincs
33%	28-40%	46%	38%	45%	51%	49%

1.65 Number of repeat victims of domestic abuse incidents

1.66 A repeat victim is someone that has reported two incidents of more to the police within a 2-month period. Unlike MARAC repeats, the figures in the table below are for victims at all levels of risk. Generally, there will be some correlation between the overall number of domestic abuse incidents reported and the number of repeat victims.

1.67 Over time, the aim is to reduce this figure by offering improved services to victims and putting effective interventions in place to manage the offending behaviour of perpetrators. The table below indicates that the number of repeat victims of domestic abuse has remained fairly consistent throughout 2019-20, 2020-21 and into 2021-22. Although it is positive that there has not been a dramatic increase as with MARAC repeats, it is clear that more must be done to begin reducing levels by focusing efforts and resources on services and interventions designed to reduce repeat victims.

Repeat Victims of Domestic Abuse Incidents*							
<i>*the number of victims with two or more occurrences within the rolling year as a monthly average</i>							
Q2 2021/22	Q1 2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018 (Calendar Year)	2017 (Calendar Year)	2016/17	2015/16
660	636	663	633	529 (44)	834 (70)	934 (78)	895 (75)

1.68 Number of repeat perpetrators

1.69 A repeat perpetrator is an individual reported to have committed or threatened domestic abuse more than once against a victim in the last rolling 12-month period. Over time, the aim is to reduce this number by focusing attention on reducing the offending behaviour of these individuals. It should be noted that some victims may have multiple perpetrators (where a perpetrator has multiple victims they will be classed as a serial perpetrator rather than repeat perpetrator). The table below indicates that there was a small increase during 2020-21, with figures in the first half of 2021-22 reducing back down to levels seen in 2019-20.

As with repeat victims, more must be done to begin reducing the number of repeat perpetrators on an ongoing basis.

Repeat Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse Incidents* <i>*the number of domestic abuse offenders who have committed an offence two or more times within the rolling year, as a monthly average</i>					
Q2 2021/22	Q1 2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018 (Calendar Year)	2017 (Calendar Year)
715	676	735	691	529	568

Note: Data not available pre-2017

1.70 Number of Serial Perpetrators

1.71 A serial perpetrator is an individual who is listed as a domestic abuse suspect or offender, has more than one domestic abuse incident and has offended against two of more different domestic abuse victims within the last 3 years.

1.72 It should be noted that the data prior to 30/06/20 did not cover the full three-year period (as per the College of Policing definition) and therefore reported levels will be seen to have increased significantly since this time. The table below indicates that after a predicted high in 2020/21, the figures have begun to level off in the first part of 2021-22 and this helps provide a baseline for future performance to be compared against.

Serial Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse Incidents* <i>*the number of domestic abuse offenders who have committed more than one domestic abuse incident against two or more different domestic abuse victims within the last 3 years, as a monthly average</i>					
Q2 2021/22	Q1 2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018 (Calendar Year)	2017 (Calendar Year)
649	666	763	588	Data not available	642

Note: Data not available pre-2017

1.73 Number of Practitioners Trained

The table below shows the number of practitioners who completed the revised core domestic abuse training and e-learning training over the last 3 years. This training is free of charge and available to the whole workforce, including partner agencies.

Domestic Abuse Training Attendance					
Course Title	Sept 2020- March 2021	April 2020 - Sept 2020	19/20	18/19	17/18
LSCB DA Level 1 (offered pre-Sept 2020)	N/A	0	31	124	39
LSCB DA Level 2 (offered pre-Sept 2020)	N/A	0	12	39	15
SCP Level 1, Parts 1 & 2 (offered post Sept 2020)	143	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SCP Level 2 workshops (offered post Sept 2020)	110	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Domestic Abuse E- Learning Completions	74	340	287	142	162

1.74 Impact of Strategy on Victims, Children and Families

1.75 Whilst there is a wide range of data available that gives a general picture of the prevalence and overall trend of domestic abuse, it is evident that wider work is required to understand better the impact of interventions and the difference they are making to victims, children, and families. It is evident that some resources have recently been implemented, and whilst it is acknowledged that they are making a difference there is a need to establish clearer impact measures to fully understand outcomes.

1.76 A revised data set to measure impact is part of the ongoing work of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Development Group and this work will be supported by the recent establishment of a dedicated domestic abuse analyst.

1.77 DOMESTIC ABUSE ACT SAFE ACCOMODATION DUTIES

1.78 Safe Accommodation Duty

1.79 The Domestic Abuse Act received Royal Ascent on 29th April 2021 and introduces a number of key measures. Part 4 of the Act places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children within refuges and other safe accommodation.

1.80 As part of the framework for the new duty, there is a requirement to undertake a Local Area Needs Assessment which is currently under development and will be completed by February 2022. The assessment will collect a range of data and information, around housing related and wider support as set out in the guidance provided by the government.

1.81 As part of the framework for delivery of the new duty, there is requirement to develop and publish a strategy for the provision of support to cover its locality and diverse groups of victims, having regards to the local area needs assessment of accommodation-based support.

1.82 This Strategy is intended to complement the wider North East Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24 and should therefore be seen as a sub-strategy of it. It outlines North East Lincolnshire Council's commitment to provide support and access to safe accommodation to victims of domestic abuse and their children.

1.83 Following consultation in December 2021, the NEL Domestic Abuse Safer Accommodation Strategy has been agreed via the Domestic Abuse Strategic Delivery Group and will be utilised to inform new commission arrangements for additional domestic abuse housing related provision.

1.84 Resourcing & Commissioning

1.85 To support the implementation of the new duties the Government has allocated £370,000 of funding for 2021/22 to North East Lincolnshire to commission new provision and it is indicated that funding will be received in future years.

1.86 A joint commissioning process has been agreed which will combine the different funding streams for domestic abuse service provision. This includes committed funding such as contributions from partner agencies, grant funding (including the Safe Accommodation Duty funding) and wider the wider Housing Related Support grant funding. This will enable a more joined up approach to commissioning resulting in greater value for money.

1.87 It is anticipated that new commissioned services will be in place by September 2022.

1.88 CONCLUSION

1.89 It is evident that there has been significant progress made to support victims of domestic abuse and their families with both a revised strategy and commitment of additional funding in perpetuity from the Council and the CCG. This has been further bolstered by external funding from the Police & Crime Commissioner and wider Government monies received as part of the Safe Accommodation duty.

1.90 This has enabled greater capacity and a range of new service provision to be introduced, with wider joint commissioning planned for 2022 which will further increase housing related support for victims of domestic abuse and their families.

1.91 It is also evident that victims of domestic abuse are receiving a much-improved level of support, especially those deemed to be at high risk and with complex needs.

- 1.92 Work to support Children and Young People has also been strengthened with a wide range of work undertaken as part of the Early Help arrangements and within wider Children's Social Care to identify and manage risk, and protect & support children and their families.
- 1.93 It is acknowledged that there is still much to do to curtail the high levels of domestic abuse in the local area and the impact this has on local victims and their children. As mentioned previously greater emphasis will be placed on understanding that impact and the outcomes of service provision and interventions to ensure we are confident that what we are putting in place has the desired result.
- 1.94 In summarising it is reasonable to conclude that domestic abuse remains a challenge for North East Lincolnshire, however there are very strong partnership working arrangements in place that in turn provide high levels of support to victims and their families. The area can have confidence that there is continued commitment and robust support and scrutiny via the strategic Safeguarding Children Partnership, Community Safety Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Boards which will enable further development and progress to be made moving forward.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to consider the crime and disorder implications in the exercise of any of its functions. Domestic Abuse impacts on the Council's responsibilities under that act and require Council involvement as a statutory responsible authority.
- 2.2 Following a desktop risk assessment exercise using the Risk and Opportunities Framework, the risk rating around a further increase in domestic abuse incidents is scored at 9. This is based on a high likelihood score of 3 (high risk that it may happen) multiplied by an impact score of 3 (potential for national media attention). It is felt that the current controls and Partnership working in place mitigate the risk with current resource allocations.
- 2.3 Following a desktop Impact Assessment using the Impact Assessment and Opportunities Tool, the current impact score is rated at 8 and is able to demonstrate that the work undertaken complies with the general equality duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The current scope of Partnership services that are in place are deemed to be sufficient.

3. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

There are potential negative reputational implications for the Council and wider Partners resulting from not fulfilling its duties to tackle and address domestic abuse. However, a clear Strategy and Action Plan is in place to mitigate this risk. A wider communications action plan is also in place which will further raise awareness of domestic abuse services and highlight progress. This will help to ensure that communications around domestic abuse are consistent with appropriate messages communicated both internally and externally.

4. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The report supports the Council's key financial objective to shift financial resource to support delivery of the Council's vision to create Stronger Communities. Any new duties will be financed through mainstream resources. This will not require any capital expenditure and there will be no net effect on Council reserves. On an ongoing basis the duties will not lead to any foreseen additional revenue spend, is consistent with Council policy and will help to contribute to improved value for money.

5. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no climate change or environmental considerations contained within this report.

6. MONITORING COMMENTS

In the opinion of the author, this report does not contain recommended changes to policy or resources (people, finance or physical assets). As a result, no monitoring comments have been sought from the Council's Monitoring Officer (Chief Legal Officer), Section 151 Officer (Director of Finance) or Strategic Workforce Lead.

7. WARD IMPLICATIONS

Affects all wards

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24 is available on the Safer NEL website here: [Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024](#)

9. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Helen Cordell, Domestic Abuse Coordinator
Spencer Hunt, Assistant Director, Safer & Partnerships

**Joanne Hewson, Deputy Chief Executive & Executive Director of Children
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