

Local Members' Interest
N/A

## **Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

### **Domestic Abuse**

#### **Recommendation**

1. That the Select Committee scrutinises the content of this report concerning Domestic Abuse.

#### **Report of Cllr Gill Heath, Cabinet Member for Communities**

### **Summary**

#### **What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?**

2. This report provides an update on the re-commissioning of Domestic Abuse services across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and on other key pieces of work associated with Domestic Abuse. The Select Committee is being asked to note the progress made.

### **Report**

#### **Background**

3. The Select Committee previously received an update on the commissioning of Domestic Abuse services across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent at its meeting on 16 January 2016. This report provides a further update along with information on other key areas of work related to Domestic Abuse across Staffordshire.

#### **Commissioning of Domestic Abuse Services**

4. Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC) are jointly commissioning Domestic Abuse (DA) services across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, with the OPCC acting as lead commissioner. Services will include provision for victims, perpetrators, children and young people.
5. DA services were tendered earlier this year in January 2017 but a contract was not awarded as the bids received did not fully meet the service specification. DA services will be re-tendered again in December 2017 with new services to be in place in October 2018. This timeframe allows for at least 12 weeks for interested organisations to return their bids and also allows for a three-month mobilisation period following award of contract in summer 2018.
6. Commissioners met with organisations that did and that did not bid when services were tendered earlier this year in order to take feedback on the process. Two

further market engagement events, with those organisations interested in bidding, took place in October 2017 and these were very well received.

7. Funding Agreements are being extended with the three commissioned Staffordshire DA Support Services providers (Arch, Pathway and Staffordshire Women's Aid), to continue with existing provision until the new services are in place in 2018. In October 2017, Pathway took over the operation of the East Staffs DA service as Home Group, the previous provider, did not wish to extend their Agreement with the County Council.
8. A Staffordshire DA Perpetrator Programme provided by Core Assets is underway and will run until the end of 2017. This is a voluntary programme for males across Staffordshire aged 16 and above. It was commissioned as a result of demand from Children's Social Care.
9. At the time of writing, the annual value of the new commissioned DA services for victims and perpetrators (from October 2018) is to be confirmed but is likely to be at least £1,836,000 per annum of which there will be a minimum spend of £600,000 per annum (ie the County Council's annual financial contribution towards DA services) in Staffordshire and a minimum spend of £421,000 per annum in Stoke-on-Trent.
10. There will be robust governance and performance management of the new contracts so that the County Council can be assured that its money is being spent to best effect and that progress against outcomes and outputs is being recorded. All of the commissioning organisations will receive regular performance management reports and be actively involved in the performance management arrangements.

### **Information and Advice on Domestic Abuse**

11. The organisations listed below are the current commissioned providers of Domestic Abuse Services across Staffordshire and can provide information, advice and guidance to victims of domestic abuse or to those who are concerned on their behalf.

- a. **Arch North Staffs** (Newcastle and Staffordshire Moorlands)

Helpline Tel: 01782 205500

Enquiry Line Tel: 01782 222421

- b. **Pathway Project** (East Staffs, Lichfield and Tamworth)

Helpline Tel: 01543 676800

Helpline e-mail address: [talktoeve@pathway-project.co.uk](mailto:talktoeve@pathway-project.co.uk)

- c. **Staffordshire Women's Aid** (Cannock, South Staffordshire and Stafford)

Helpline 0300 330 5959

Additional sources of help are:

- d. **Staffordshire Victim Gateway** - provides information, advice and support to all

victims of crime across Staffordshire even if they have not reported it to the police.

Tel: 0330 0881 339 (charged at a local rate) [help@staffsvictimsgateway.org.uk](mailto:help@staffsvictimsgateway.org.uk)

- e. **National Domestic Violence Helpline** This is a Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline, run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge, and is a national service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf.

Tel: 0808 2000 247

- f. Where someone is in immediate danger, always dial 999.

### **Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Domestic Abuse Strategy**

- 12. As part of the re-commissioning process, a comprehensive Needs Assessment was undertaken and used to inform the joint commissioning activity. It has also been used to develop the first pan-Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Domestic Abuse strategy. The strategy was consulted upon widely and drew upon feedback from engagement activities, evidence from the Needs Assessment as well as the national Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy. Joint governance arrangements have been established to oversee the delivery of the strategy and a shared multi-agency action plan is being developed.
- 13. The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Development Board is holding a workshop to develop the action plan in early December 2017.

### **Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Development Board**

- 14. A pan Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Development Board has been established as part of new governance arrangements around domestic abuse and has met three times in March, July and October 2017. The Board will be responsible for the delivery of the pan Staffordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2017-20. It is jointly chaired by the County Council's Commissioner for Safety, Children and Families and Stoke-on-Trent City Council's Strategic Manager - Safe and Healthy Communities. The Board has a broad membership from a wide variety of agencies including (but not limited to) Police, District and Borough Councils, Probation, Health agencies, the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board and Safeguarding Children Boards for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and commissioned Domestic Abuse providers.

### **Staffordshire Domestic Abuse Steering Group**

- 15. Staffordshire's multi-agency Domestic Abuse Steering Group will continue to meet until such time as the Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Development Board (referred to above) is firmly established. It is anticipated that organisations currently represented on the DA Steering Group will be represented either on the

DA Commissioning Board itself or one of its sub-groups.

### **Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)**

16. A Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) is a review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by:
  - a. A person to whom they were related or with whom they were or had been in an intimate personal relationship (an 'intimate personal relationship' includes relationships between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality), or
  - b. A member of the same household as themselves, held with a view to identifying the lessons to be learnt from the death.
17. Copies of the Overview Reports and Executive Summaries resulting from completed DHRs undertaken in Staffordshire can be found on the Staffordshire website at: [Published Staffordshire Domestic Homicide Reviews](#)
18. As at November 2017, there are two DHRs underway in Staffordshire.
19. A piece of work is being carried out by the Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Delivery Board to look at the key themes arising from DHRs undertaken to date across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

### **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

20. MASH reporting continues to be routinely shared via the Joint Local Safeguarding Children Board Performance function and to provide data to inform the position concerning Domestic Abuse as part of the assurance process. Information is provided on the throughput and outcomes as well as risks and issues.
21. 'Project Doing More' moved to an implementation phase on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016; this effectively improved the MASH model and significantly reduced the challenge of case backlogs compared to what partners have previously experienced. A three month review was undertaken in May 2016 where improvements were made to the MASH Police triage process; this effectively concluded on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2016 and was followed by a 'bedding in' period up to and including the 2016 Christmas public holidays where traditionally most demand is seen.
22. The new model improved the throughput of cases across MASH and reduced process duplication for the MASH Police Team. All MASH agencies have benefitted from this as the majority of referrals processed within MASH originate from police incidents. The police triage process, introduced through MASH Doing More, provides a consistent and structured mechanism for pre-referral information sharing. This also contributes towards maximising the value of MASH by ensuring all children, known to partners, in a household are identified at the earliest opportunity thereby enabling practitioners to make better informed decisions around the management of risk at the referral stage of the safeguarding process.

23. In addition to this, MASH health colleagues are sharing outcomes documents, produced from this process that are contributing towards prevention within the community. A case study early this year supported a hypothesis that the sharing of outcomes documents contributes towards prevention.
24. Compliance with timely referrals has improved and this was reported on at the Joint Local Safeguarding Children Board Performance Subgroup.
25. There have been some delays in getting domestic abuse referrals to partners brought about by serious Police technology challenges that have led to backlogs and then a very significant deficit in police resources in MASH has compounded this problem. Things are slowly improving with a high organisational level of intervention providing the necessary support to re-establishing the infrastructure.

### **Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)**

26. The Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) review (2016) was originally commissioned by the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Strategic Management Board to provide them with assurance in their role that MARAC was delivering effectively for vulnerable people in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Circumstances around MARAC changed in January 2016 and beyond following the Staffordshire Police response to their inadequate rating by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. This therefore significantly changed the original remit of the review to propose a fundamental new model for MARAC that is able to support the significant increase in demand and deliver the best possible outcomes from the process for those involved in serious Domestic Violence situations.
27. On 1 December 2016 the review report that discussed issues with the current model and included an options appraisal of four potential future models was published for consultation. This consultation process concluded on 15 January 2017 and the conclusion report was considered and a decision made to implement the recommended model by the MASH Strategic Management Board on 26 January 2017. A sub group was established, led by C/Supt Jeff Moore to oversee the delivery of a conceptual model that could be adopted across the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent area.
28. The group is made up of professionals from many statutory agencies involved in dealing with domestic abuse and also the commissioners of services that cover the same area. John Maddox, MASH Principal Officer, is leading the review into its second stage.

### **Method:**

29. In order to ensure that a model appropriate to the need and demand is achieved it has been decided to adopt a pilot site development so that lessons and changes can be derived in an agile development method. This should provide the environment to understand whether there is a commitment from agencies to work differently in order to ensure that cases are managed in a timelier manner but whilst retaining the principles of the Safelives effective MARAC process.

**Governance:**

30. At present the partnership governance has sat with MASH strategic management group and as outlined the project board is a sub group of this. It is however envisaged that the Commissioning Development Board will in time adopt this work within its remit once it has matured. Currently the project reports into the County and City Domestic Abuse forums.

**Demand:**

31. The total MARAC demand for April 2016-March 2017 was 2247 and there have been 447 MARAC cases within the first quarter of this 2017-2018. Data indicates an upward trend in respect of repeat cases; this is an issue that will be being explored further as part of the current MARAC review and the development of an outcome framework.
32. Mental Health services are continuing to support MASH arrangements with relevant information in respect of domestic abuse. Further discussions are taking place around the substance misuse information in support of the toxic trio risk (ie domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental ill-health) in MASH.
33. Consultation in relation to this project has been undertaken on an individual agency basis to establish the statutory strategic support that will be required to deliver any change.

**Next steps:**

34. In October 2017 a Pilot was launched in Tamworth, Staffordshire adopting the principles set out in the MARAC review as to a different way of working. This in essence will mean that domestic abuse cases will be discussed daily in the Multi-Agency team (MAT) meetings and that MARAC cases will be initially actioned on a daily basis but reviewed against additional information from MASH on a weekly basis to ensure that a multi-agency plan is effective and delivering appropriate safety for victims and their family. This plan will also consider opportunities for perpetrators.
35. The method and outcomes will be evaluated with a view to formulating a business case for further adoption and roll out. In the meantime MARAC in its traditional form will continue elsewhere.
36. The anticipated benefits are that earlier identification of issues owned locally could provide a wealth of existing knowledge and agency contribution that delivers outcomes at the time and not weeks after the event. Joined up thinking delivers joined up outcomes and taking a whole family approach means that local agencies can be alerted such as schools which is currently a gap, thus providing that additional safety for children. This is in line with the Place Based Approach for the children's and families system and provides an opportunity for the earliest help.
37. The project board will next review the position in November 2017 to ensure that

service delivery meets the assumptions of the project. Close liaison is being maintained with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) in relation to the commissioning of services from summer 2018. A full business case will be provided by April 2018.

## **Staffordshire Police**

38. A formal PEEL (Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Leadership) Effectiveness inspection was conducted during October 2017 by HMIC. The inspection covered vulnerability including Domestic Abuse.
39. HMIC are currently conducting another online survey with domestic abuse practitioners about their experiences of the service provided by police over the previous 12 months to inform this PEEL Effectiveness inspection.
40. Staffordshire Police Domestic Abuse Procedure has been reviewed and subject to internal consultation. The procedure is subject to ratification prior to publication.
41. Supt Jav Omer is leading a piece of work to review the effectiveness of the DIAL risk assessment for domestic abuse incidents. This is being undertaken in conjunction with the College of Policing and academic partners. This work includes the examination of data to assess the weighting of the risk assessment questions to accurately assess risk.
42. Staffordshire Police will sign up to the OPCC Supporting Domestic Abuse Victims at Work initiative. Internal Domestic Abuse Champions have been identified and will receive specialist training in order to support colleagues subject to domestic abuse. An internal Domestic Abuse Policy has been drafted to support this.
43. HMIC have conducted a recent inspection into Stalking nationally titled "Living in Fear" this produced a number of findings and recommendations for all Police forces.
44. Staffordshire Police have conducted an internal scrutiny and support review of Stalking cases. An action plan has been developed with key themes of training, identification and risk assessment. A series of five Public Protection Development Days commenced in September 2017 with the delivery of specialist training by Paladin to officers and staff regarding the identification, investigation and risk assessment of Stalking cases (including DA). This will be further supported by additional enhanced training for 25 single points of contact (SPOCs) across the service to implement the learning and ensure the Police are responding effectively to victims.
45. Improvement activity within the Force continues to be monitored and delivered through robust and established Senior Officer led governance arrangements.

## **Learning from Inspections**

46. Staffordshire County Council Children's Social Care Service was inspected by Ofsted between 31st July and 4th August 2017 under the new Pilot Inspection of

Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) Inspection process. The final Ofsted report (paragraph 3) identified that:

*"The local authority has worked well with the police and partners to strengthen the response to domestic abuse, following concerns identified in Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's inspection of Staffordshire police in 2016. The multi-agency safeguarding hub completes checks on all police domestic abuse notifications, and a triage system helps to identify children in need of an urgent response. However, the police do not consistently notify the local authority of all domestic abuse incidents in a timely manner. Further work is needed to ensure a systematic and timely response to all notifications".*

47. This is an issue that the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board will want to scrutinise and seek assurances about going forward.

### **Link to Strategic Plan**

48. The work undertaken in relation to domestic abuse links with the third of the three priorities within the County Council's Strategic Plan 2014-18, ie that the people of Staffordshire will feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community.

### **Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity**

49. The Select Committee previously received an update on the commissioning of Domestic Abuse services across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent at its meeting on 16 January 2016.

### **Community Impact**

50. The joint recommissioning of domestic abuse services across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, and all the other key areas of work outlined in this report, should benefit those members of the community who are victims, or at risk of being victims, of domestic abuse.

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### **Appendices/Background papers**

None