

**A separate report is submitted in the private part of the agenda in respect of this item, as it contains details of financial information required to be kept private in accordance with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The grounds for privacy are that it refers to the identity, financial and business affairs of an organisation and the amount of expenditure proposed to be incurred by the Council under a particular contract for the supply of goods or services.**

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee  
Cabinet

6<sup>th</sup> November 2013  
19 November 2013

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member (Community Safety & Equalities) – Councillor Townshend  
Cabinet Member (Policy and Leadership) – Councillor Mrs Lucas  
Cabinet Member (Children and Young People) – Councillor Duggins  
Cabinet Member (Health and Adult Services) - Councillor Gingell

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Executive Director, People

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title: Commissioning of Domestic Violence and Abuse Services**

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

Although the service to be commissioned will be provided across all Wards in the City, the impact is not expected to be significant and is therefore not considered to be a key decision.

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**Executive Summary:**

In 2010 the then Community Safety Partnership (the statutory Partnership responsible for preventing and detecting crime and disorder and the prevention of re-offending) acknowledged that Domestic Violence & Abuse (DVA) was a priority community safety issue for the city as there was clear evidence that DVA has a significant impact on services and communities and affects individuals; directly and indirectly.

In response to this, the Community Safety Partnership commissioned an extensive review of both statutory and commissioned services responding to this issue and authorised the development of a new service delivery model to :-

- Better manage existing levels of DVA in the City
- Work towards reducing the rise in cases and predicted future demand
- Ensure that a range of services are available and accessible to those that require them in a timely and efficient manner

This report provides an update on the outcome of the review and details the next steps needed to progress a new service model.

The proposed new service has been created as part of an integrated multi-agency model which will provide domestic violence and abuse services seeking to ensure a clear first point of contact, prevent duplication and strengthen information sharing. This will include a helpline and interactive website, a single point of access to victim services, a range of supported accommodation for victims, active case management for victims, an aftercare service for victims, a new solution focused programme to work with perpetrators and a children's support service.

The Council currently commissions nine separate services across five providers which provide a range of support and interventions to domestic violence and abuse victims (including support workers and accommodation), children and previously a service for perpetrators which has since ceased delivery. Existing contracts were extended to enable time to design the new model/service.

A number of research projects, consultation events and focus groups were undertaken between 2011 and 2013 with providers, referring agencies and service users, in order to assess need and identify gaps in current provision. The findings have been used to develop the specifications for the proposed service to be commissioned within the model; however the final consultation phase for the children's element is ongoing and will finish shortly.

#### **Recommendations:**

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee are requested to:

1. Consider the proposed service model detailed in this report and forward any comments or recommendations to Cabinet for their consideration.

The Cabinet is requested to have regards to the contents of this report when considering the recommendations contained within the private report on this matter and to:

1. Consider any comments or recommendations from Scrutiny Committee regarding the proposed service model
2. Authorise the commencement of a tender process for the proposed new service model.
3. Review the impact and outcome of the equality and consultation assessment in accordance with section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and approve this document.
4. Note the budget requirement as detailed in the private report and the intention to request that additional resources be considered as part of future budget setting proposals for 2014/2015.
5. Request progress report against recommendations 2-4 above on a bi-monthly basis until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014.

#### **List of Appendices included:**

Appendix 1 - Promoting Children and Young People's Well Being Model Levels of Need  
Appendix 2 – Equality and Consultation Assessment

#### **Other useful background papers:**

None

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee - 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

## **Report title: Commissioning of Domestic Violence and Abuse Multi Agency Model**

### **1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 Domestic violence and abuse (DVA) is defined by the Home Office as: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; emotional.
- 1.2 Coventry has one of the highest levels of domestic violence and abuse in the West Midlands and in 2012 police recorded 3,337 incidents of DVA, identified 2,483 individual victims and charged 649 individual perpetrators. National research shows that only 35% of DVA incidents are reported to the Police and therefore the actual level of DVA in the City will be significantly higher.
- 1.3 In September 2010, the Coventry Domestic Violence & Abuse Partnership (strategic sub group of the Coventry Community Safety Partnership) were requested to undertake an extensive review of both statutory and commissioned services responding to the increased levels of need in the City and to ensure integration across a range of agencies supporting DVA services.
- 1.4 Further to this, the Council, on behalf of the Community Safety Partnership, commissioned Deloitte to support stakeholder relationship management and to produce a business case for a new model of service delivery based on three pathways of : -
  - Early intervention and prevention
  - Active case management
  - Safe and well aftercare
- 1.5 As a result of this review, work with Deloitte and stakeholder engagement, the proposed model for services was developed in line with the following principles:-
  - Better manage existing levels of DVA in the City
  - Work towards reducing the rise in cases and predicted future demand
  - Ensure that a range of services are available and accessible to those that require it in a timely and efficient manner

### **1.6 Existing Services**

- 1.6.1 Coventry currently commissions nine separate services across five providers which provide a range of support and interventions to domestic violence and abuse victims (including support workers and accommodation), children and previously a service for perpetrators.
- 1.6.2 Current services for victims include three separate supported accommodation services providing safe and confidential accommodation and support; a floating support service for Black, Asian Minority Ethnic and Refugee victims to provide support with the emotional and practical effects of domestic violence and abuse; a Sanctuary Scheme to provide emotional and practical support, an outreach and befriending project and security installations to properties; and an Independent Domestic Advocate Service to support victims through court processes.

1.6.3 The current provision for children delivers services for children and young people up to the age of 18 who are affected by domestic violence and abuse, focusing on direct advocacy and support for the child/young person.

## **1.7 Learning from Serious Case Reviews**

1.7.1 In 2012, the Coventry Safeguarding Children's Board undertook a Serious Case Review (SCR) for Child W, which identified a range of issues for children whose parents are accessing DVA services. An action from the review was to ensure that the new service model incorporated consistent and comprehensive quality assurance standards for the provision of DVA services. Therefore, a requirement within the new victim service to be commissioned will: -

- Ensure robust quality assurance standards are in place to underpin contracts
- Build in compliance with safeguarding children policies and procedure
- Require that providers engage with the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process
- Ensure robust information sharing protocols with other agencies (ie. health visitors, police, etc)
- Incorporate a robust quality assurance/contract management process to ensure monitoring against the agreed service specification and delivery model is consistent and in place. This will include the auditing of files, focus groups with service users and regular forums with referring agencies

1.7.2 The recent Daniel Pelka Serious Case Review (SCR) has identified a number of improvements required to the way agencies work together to safeguard children that are in families where domestic violence and abuse takes place. The review includes the following points:

- DVA is always a child protection issue and must be approached with this as the mind set of professionals.
- There must be a child focus to all interventions. The impact of domestic abuse on children's emotional wellbeing and development needs to be addressed by Police when checking children are safe. No assessment of risk within a family can be effective without direct engagement of the child to understand their experiences, wishes and feelings.
- The scope of early help and prevention work to support children living with domestic abuse should be understood by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB).

1.7.3 Whilst the findings of the review have no direct recommendations for commissioned services, the above principles and good practice will apply to the new services to be commissioned.

1.7.4 Additionally, the findings of the review may have an impact in terms of the level of referrals to any service commissioned for children. It is also critical therefore that commissioned services work with and alongside all statutory DVA services in the City. More specifically, service providers will be required to proactively share information and adhere to inter-agency safeguarding policies; making the relevant links with both statutory agencies (ie. Health Visitors, GP's, Hospitals, Police, Schools) and other support agencies to ensure children are safeguarded.

1.7.5 Building on the current joint screening arrangements for DVA, further work is underway to explore additional opportunities to strengthen the way statutory agencies work together to share information and manage high risk cases.

## **1.8 Services to be commissioned**

- 1.8.1 Commissioned services are only part of the overall response to DVA in the City. A range of statutory and universal services also support and provide interventions to DVA victims, children/young people and perpetrators, including Health (GPs, Hospitals, Health Visitors) Children's Centres, Schools, Police and Probation. The new service will work alongside statutory services to provide an integrated response to service users as outlined above.
- 1.8.2 The proposed new service was developed to provide domestic violence and abuse services which include key elements of a suite of services that seek to ensure:
- a clear first point of contact for victims
  - reduction in duplication
  - effective information sharing
  - learning from recommendations from Serious Case Review's and Domestic Homicide Reviews

## **1.9 Victim Services**

- 1.9.1 Data on the level of demand for victim floating support services shows that current provision is supporting only 9% of need for victims who are known to the police (based on 2011/12 data) . The actual number of victims in the City will be considerably higher as national research demonstrates that only 35% of DVA incidents are reported to the police. The number of victims recorded by the police who would be aware of, require or be willing to access a service under this model is unknown.
- 1.9.2 Data on the level of demand for victim supported accommodation services shows that the current provision is always fully utilised. During 2011/12 123 victims were unable to access accommodation due to full capacity within the schemes and an additional 55 victims were unable to access accommodation due to a lack of suitable sized units.
- 1.9.3 The new service will increase the number of victims supported by floating support services to meet an element of the waiting list demand and increase the number of units of supported accommodation to include a wider range of suitably sized accommodation.
- 1.9.4 The new victim services will replace the existing eight contracts.
- 1.9.5 There will be an integrated service and care pathway for DVA victims with a clear point of access and single needs assessment procedure to ensure that victims only have to tell their story once. Services will be tailored to each individual service user's needs and victims will be able to move between different elements of support seamlessly as required.
- 1.9.6 The victim's service will include:
- A telephone helpline for victims, children/young people, perpetrators, members of the public and professionals to provide advice, support and information on domestic violence and abuse.
  - Interactive systems on the Safetotalk website ([www.safetotalk.org.uk](http://www.safetotalk.org.uk)) and via social media e.g. live chat; direct e-mail referrals; forums; to provide victims, children/young people, perpetrators, members of the public and professionals with advice, support and information.
  - A single point of access to all victim services, that links with children/young people and perpetrator services, and a clear pathway through victim services.

- A variety of supported accommodation units to provide safe and appropriate temporary accommodation for single victims and families, including a specific service for Black Asian Minority Ethnic and Refugee victims.
- Active case management and support for victims who are living in supported accommodation and victims who are community based, including a specific service for Black Asian Minority Ethnic and Refugee victims
- Low level aftercare support and befriending for victims moving on from active case management support.
- The provision of a range of domestic security and target hardening to homes where the victim has left the perpetrator and wants to remain living safely in the property.

1.9.7 The aim of all victim services will be to provide emotional and practical support to ensure that victims and their children are effectively safeguarded. They will also be responsible for increasing the general awareness of domestic violence and abuse.

1.9.8 Key to the service will be raising victim's awareness and understanding of DVA and providing support to raise their confidence, enable them to exit violent relationships and decrease the likelihood of them becoming a repeat victim. This type of support is integral to the suite of services within the new victim model ie. accommodation, active case management and after care.

## **1.10 Perpetrator Service**

1.10.1 Data on the number of perpetrators in the City demonstrates that 649 individual perpetrators were known to the police during 2012. The actual number of perpetrators in the City will be considerably higher as national research demonstrates that only 35% of DVA incidents are reported to the police. The number of perpetrators who would be aware of, require or be willing to access a service under this model is unknown.

1.10.2 The perpetrator service will be commissioned in two separate elements:

- The development of a bespoke perpetrator programme for Coventry by Coventry University. This has been commissioned by Coventry Community Safety Partnership as a one-off piece of work and funded separately from the model. The new programme will be solution focused and flexible so it can be delivered on a one to one or group basis. The proposal includes delivering training to up to 20 staff in key organisations eg. Children's Social Care and drug and alcohol services, to enable staff to deliver the programme internally to perpetrators who are already accessing their services.
- The provision of a caseworker service, commissioned as part of the overall model, to deliver the solution focused programme directly with perpetrators in the community. This service will also provide support and advice to staff in other organisations who are delivering the programme to ensure good practice is maintained.

## **1.11 Children's Service**

1.11.1 The detail of the children's model is being finalised. The Equality and Consultation Assessment highlighted that demand for the service is likely to be in excess of the currently available resource.

1.11.2 In 2008 the children's DVA service was commissioned with a preventative focus to work with children whose life chances and outcomes may be impaired if they don't receive a service (Common Assessment Framework level 2) and children whose life chances and

outcomes will be impaired if they don't receive a service (Common Assessment Framework level 3).

- 1.11.3 In practice, it has provided the service to children at Level 3 but has not been able to support children at risk of significant harm or removal from their home (CAF level 4).
- 1.11.4 An exceptionally high number of Level 4 cases involved some form of domestic violence. In 2012/13 662 children and young people became subject to Child Protection Plans or Children Looked After. In addition, at least 320 children supported at Common Assessment Framework Level 3 by Children and Family First Teams are thought to be experiencing some form of domestic violence
- 1.11.5 In March 2013, the waiting list for the current service had 34 children on it. This increased to 41 children in Quarter 1 of 2013/14 and to 50 children in Quarter 2 (increase of 21% and 47% respectively).
- 1.11.6 The financial envelope has been flexed to provide additional funding for the children's service. This will enable it to extend its service to children at Level 4. The details of this aspect of the model are being finalised: there will be an overall increase in the numbers of children being supported, but some children will continue to need to wait for support from this service due to levels of demand
- 1.11.7 The whole of the proposed new service will be outcome driven. The high level outcomes include:
  - Victims, children/young people and perpetrators are provided with appropriate advice, support and access to services at the earliest opportunity.
  - Victims' awareness of domestic violence and abuse is increased via the provision of structured interventions, and the likelihood of victims returning to abusive relationships is reduced.
  - Children living in domestic violence and abuse situations are safeguarded, so that they can continue to live at home, and victims' understanding of the effects of domestic violence and abuse on children and young people are increased.
  - Victims receive a range of emotional and practical support to enable them to rebuild their lives and develop independence at the earliest opportunity.
  - Perpetrators are effectively challenged and the appropriate interventions provided in order to support a change in their behaviour via a flexible and solution focused approach that can be delivered in a range of venues and meet their individual needs.
  - Victims and children are able to remain living safely in their homes via the provision of security installations
  - Children and young people who are affected by/living with domestic violence and abuse receive a range of emotional support to enable them to rebuild their lives and develop into independent adults.
  - The parents of children supported by the children's service, where required, are supported to increase their awareness of domestic violence, its impact on children and management of risk.
  - Children and young people in other children's services are supported via advice and guidance to professionals.
- 1.11.8 Modifications have been made to the service specifications to reflect learning from stakeholder and user consultation processes.



## **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1 A robust and extensive research, review and consultation process informed the development of the overall City-wide model and the suite of services to be commissioned.
- 2.2 Key factors taken into consideration included existing and predicted demand for this type of service, findings and learning from serious case reviews, best practice and views of stakeholders and service users.
- 2.3 A range of other key factors were considered as follows:-
  - a) Commissioning supported accommodation as a separate service from other victim services – this is not a recommended approach due to the lack of integration with other services and inefficiencies this could create, in terms of contract management and service provision.
  - b) Using an outcome based commissioning process – this was considered appropriate and will be integral to the proposed new service model in order to enable providers to propose innovative and flexible solutions to meet the required service outcomes and identified gaps.
  - c) Commissioning the children's service as part of the overall model – this was considered necessary to ensure improved integration between adult and children's services and to strengthen the notion that child protection should be fundamental across all DVA services.
  - d) Flexing the financial envelope between the Adult Victim and Children services – this is a recommended approach which will reduce the level of funding allocated to victim services and increase the level of funding allocated to children's services to enable the latter to work with children with higher levels of need.
  - e) Tendering for a mixed model to work with children who have needs at Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Level 3 (children whose life chances and outcomes will be impaired without the support of services) and CAF Level 4 (children at risk of significant harm or removal from home) which is an extension of the current provision. For further explanation of the CAF levels see the Promoting Children and Young People's Well Being Model Levels of Need attached as Appendix 1

## **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 A robust and extensive research and consultation process has been undertaken over three years, to inform the development of the proposed new model. This included research by external consultants, engagement sessions with providers and referring agencies and focus groups with service users.
- 3.2 Specific engagement regarding all elements of DVA services were undertaken which focused on areas such as referral pathways, gaps and weaknesses in service provision, roles and responsibilities of support workers, improving communication and joint work across services (ie. Schools, Police, other agencies) and the overall outcomes to be delivered to both adult and children affected by domestic violence and abuse.
- 3.3 The Equality and Consultation Assessment identifies the range, mediums and outcome of individual consultation exercises including key views at all stages of the process from 2010 onwards.

3.4 Comments from referring agencies, providers and service users have been used to draft the service specification. Prospective bidders will be able to comment on the draft Invitation to Tender (ITT) for an 11 day period between 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2014 and 14<sup>th</sup> January 2014. All comments will be considered and may result in amendments to the ITT before the formal procurement process.

#### **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

4.1 A notice will be placed on the City Council website which will give information on how to register an interest in the tender process, indicative timescales and details of when the contract will be awarded

4.2 The service and monitoring requirements and outcome measures will be explicit within the contract to ensure the service requirements are being met.

#### **5. Comments from Executive Director, Resources**

##### **5.1 Financial implications**

5.1.1 The financial implications of the commissioning of the new model are detailed in the private report.

##### **5.2 Legal implications**

5.2.1 The procurement will be an open competitive process as required under the Council's Rules for Contract and the Public Contract Regulations 2006.

5.2.2 The current contractors have agreed to extend their contracts on existing terms and conditions pending the commencement of the procurement process and award of contract. Supported accommodation contractors have agreed a 10% reduction in funding until the new contract is awarded

#### **6. Other implications**

##### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?**

6.1.1 This service supports the delivery of the vision and values set out within the Council Plan 2011-14, by ensuring that domestic violence is not tolerated and support and intervention is effective and that children are supported to live safe from harm.

6.1.2 Challenging domestic violence and abuse, supporting victims and the prevention of re-offending are key priorities for the Coventry Community Safety Partnership.

##### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

6.2.1 The consultation and commissioning process has been overseen by Commissioning, Procurement, Legal, Finance and Heads of Service.

6.2.2 A Risk Analysis document has been completed and is being used as a working tool to mitigate identified risks.

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

6.3.1 The revised commissioning process will enable the Council to commission services that are value for money and meet the needs of domestic violence and abuse victims, perpetrators and children. An increased focus on early intervention and a robust pathway through services should reduce the number of repeat incidents of domestic violence and abuse and the social and welfare costs associated with these.

### **6.4 Equalities / EIA**

6.4.1 The discharge of the duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 has been addressed as part of the commissioning process for the service. An Equality Consultation Analysis has been completed and updated on a regular basis and will be included in the tender documentation. (See attached Appendix 2 to the report).

6.4.2 Historically, domestic violence and abuse services have been contracted and commissioned separately. By bringing these services together into one procurement process it will enable better outcomes for vulnerable victims and children and reduce offending. Service Users will receive an enhanced and streamlined service.

6.4.3 The Equality Consultation Analysis confirms that the new contract will positively address inequalities experienced by people experiencing domestic violence and abuse, including female and male victims of DVA, Black Asian Minority Ethnic and Refugee victims of DVA, people with physical, sensory and learning disabilities and children and young people. The new service will also ensure that systems are in place to enable service users who have difficulty communicating in written or verbal English to access the service and that the service is fully accessible to people with physical and sensory impairments.

6.4.4 Overall service users and providers will benefit from the new service which will address identified gaps and increase the number of service users supported. However Local Providers who deliver current services may be negatively affected if they are not successful in being awarded the new contract.

### **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

None

### **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

6.6.1 The new service will provide an improved response to domestic violence and abuse in the City, therefore supporting the work of other partner organisations who work with domestic violence and abuse victims, perpetrators and children such as the police. Some current third sector providers may not be successful in securing a contract as part of this process.

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