

CABINET

21 October 2014

Title: Domestic and Sexual Violence Provision in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No
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Summary Reducing Domestic and Sexual Violence (DSV) is a responsibility shared by the Council and partner organisations. In addressing this responsibility the Council has a number of statutory duties to fulfil. Following a detailed report to the Health and Wellbeing Board last year, this report updates Cabinet on the prevalence of Domestic and Sexual Violence in Barking and Dagenham and highlights local performance against key indicators. The report also outlines the current provision of services to support victims and children.	
Recommendation(s) The Cabinet is asked to note the report.	

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 *A Review of Services for Those Affected by Domestic Violence*, a report presented at the LBBB Health and Wellbeing Board on 16 July 2013 (included in background papers) detailed the Government definition of Domestic Violence published on 24 February 2013 and defines it as:

“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, 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. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological*
- physical*

- *sexual*
- *financial*
- *emotional*

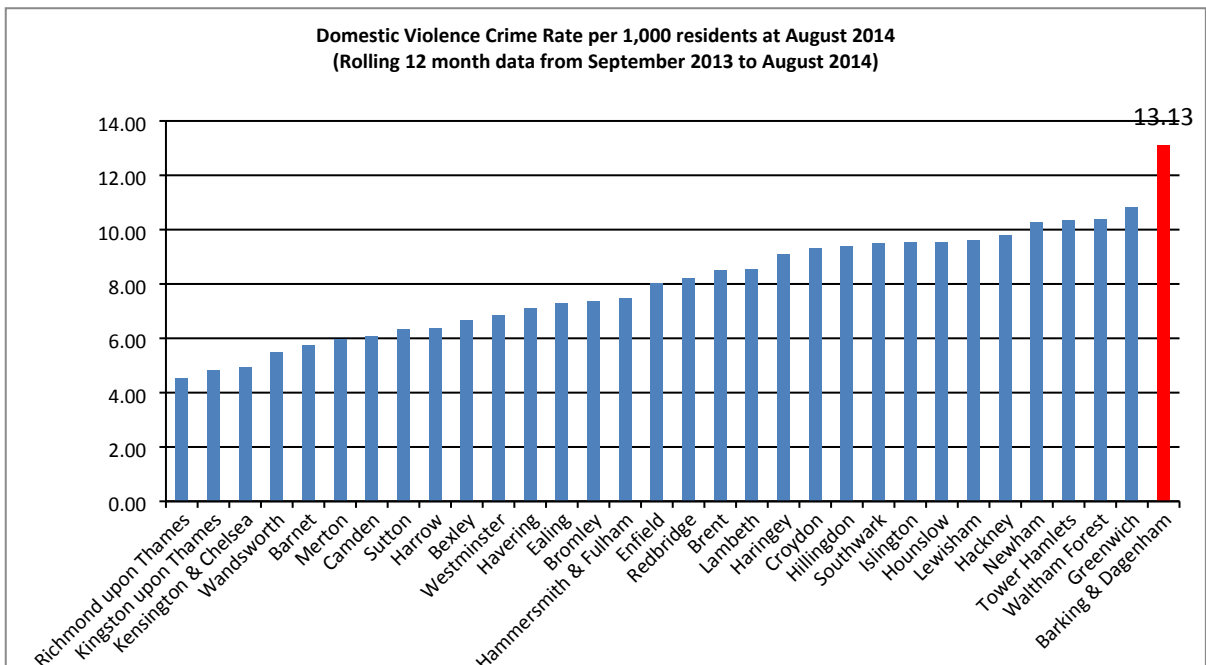
Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. **

*This definition includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

- 1.2 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory requirement on local authorities to monitor the level of domestic abuse in their communities and establish partnerships in order to reduce the problem as well as to work together with other agencies to highlight the issue and co-ordinate a response. The Community Safety Partnership brings together the representatives of statutory, voluntary and private organisations which deal with crime reduction, including domestic violence.
- 1.3 In LBBD, domestic and sexual violence is a priority for the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and strategic and operational delivery is provided by a number of internal and external partners including: Public Health, Community Safety, Housing, Children's Services, the Police and Victim Support. The CSP is also responsible for co-ordinating reviews of Domestic Violence Homicides, developing action plans from lessons learned and for feeding back formally via the CSP to the Home Office.
- 1.4 The Borough commissions a number of services to fulfil the above statutory requirement, addressing the needs of victims of D&SV and working with offenders to reduce incidence of D&SV. More detail on the services provided is given at Appendix A.

Local prevalence and performance

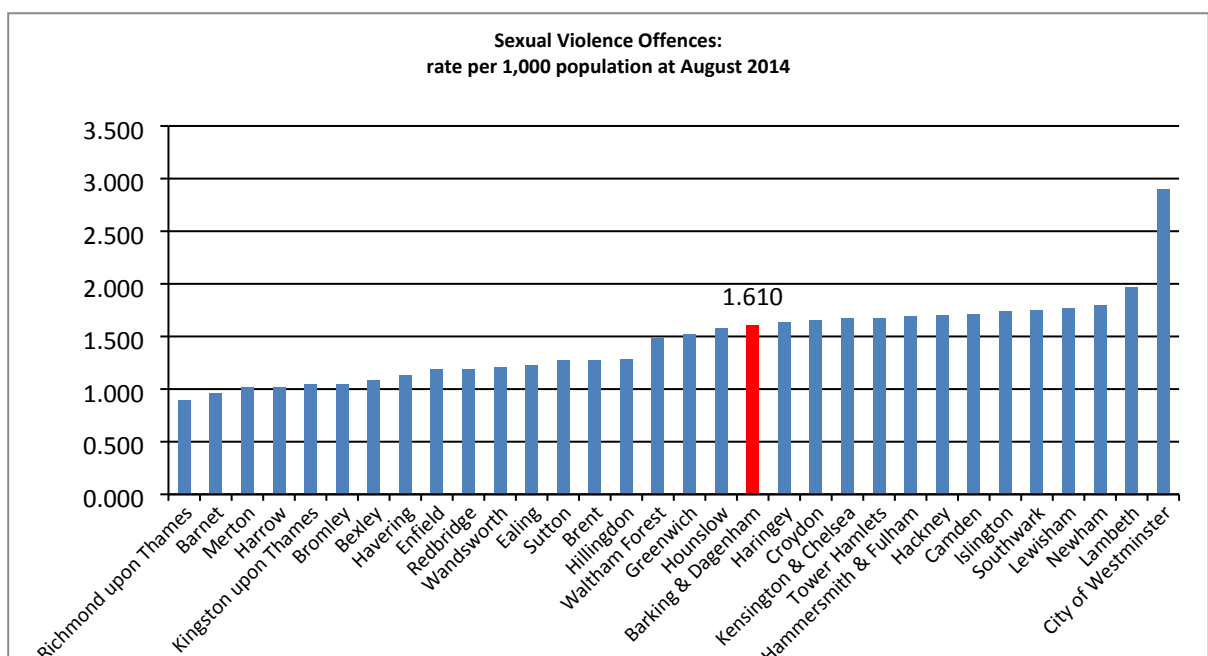
- 1.5 Prevalence of domestic and sexual violence and performance of local services are measured based on the number of crimes reported, the number of referrals to the Borough's Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy (IDSVA) service and the number of repeat referrals to the Borough's Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).
- 1.6 As indicated in the graph below, Barking and Dagenham has the highest reported domestic abuse offences across the area covered by the Metropolitan Police Service, at 13.1 per 1000 of the population.



1.7 According to local police data there were 989 Domestic Violence offences reported between April 2014 and August 2014 compared with the London average of 834. This is an increase of 200 cases (25%) when compared with the same period in 2013. Barking and Dagenham has a higher increase in reported Domestic Violence offences compared to the average across London for the same period (+18%).

1.8 Year to date at August 2014 there have been a total of 150 sexual offences reported to the police in Barking and Dagenham. This is a 13% increase on the same period the year before. Across London there has been an increase of 24%, therefore we are below the London average.

1.9 At August 2014 Barking & Dagenham had 1.59 sexual offences per 1,000 residents and is ranked 19th out of the 32 London boroughs. The graph below shows sexual violence offences across all 32 boroughs.



- 1.10 It is important to note that although the proportion of violent crime attributed to domestic violence is high in Barking and Dagenham, the issue may not necessarily be more commonplace than elsewhere. An increase in reporting can be seen as a willingness of victims to come forward because of confidence that the issue will be addressed or because of availability and awareness of service provision. Despite this, we continue to monitor increases and analyse changes in order to appropriately target resources to manage the risks around domestic and sexual violence.
- 1.11 Performance is also measured against the number of repeat referrals to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). Year to date at August 2014 there have been a total of 34 repeat referrals to the MARAC service out of the 146 referrals received, this equates to 23% which is below the 28%-40% range expected by Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA). Barking and Dagenham is in line with the London and national benchmarks (19% and 24% respectively).

Local governance and service provision

- 1.12 The LBBB Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) has prioritised Domestic Violence. A range of services which are provided to victims and children are funded through the Public Health Grant and through its coordination role, the HWBB ensures that the issue of Domestic Violence is recognised and addressed across both the wider health and social care economy.
- 1.13 The LBBB Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is made up of the responsible authorities (Police, Local Authority, Fire and Rescue Authority, Probation Service and Health) and works to protect local people from crime and to support victims. The CSP is the main accountable body for domestic violence in terms of crime reduction and the response to the Home Office around domestic violence homicide reviews (a statutory requirement where there has been a DV murder).
- 1.14 The Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategic Group, a subgroup of the CSP, meets quarterly to monitor progress against the Borough's Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy. The Group includes representatives from Community Safety, Public Health, Children's Services, North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT), Mental Health Services, Hestia (commissioned provider) Victim Support, Housing, Police and Probation, and reports regularly to both the CSP and the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 1.15 A Domestic and Sexual Violence Forum meets quarterly which allows specialist local providers to network, share good practice and advise of gaps in service delivery or concerns about service delivery that clients may encounter. This forum is chaired by Alison Lines, Parent Support Advisor of Godwin Primary School. Reports from the forum are reported upwards to the Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategic Group quarterly and used to inform strategic decisions.
- 1.16 In LBBB there are a number of commissioned services which seek to support victims of DSV in the Borough in line with the key priorities of the Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy:

- to prevent domestic and sexual violence from happening in the first place
- to provide support to victims where violence does occur;
- to reduce the risk of domestic and sexual violence and bring perpetrators to justice; and
- to work in partnership locally to achieve the best outcomes.

1.17 As identified in the report to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 16 July 2013 Health and Wellbeing Board Report, services fall into three categories:

- **core** – a service which is essential for the protection of individuals;
- **supporting** – a service which is necessary to support one of the core services; and
- **supplementary** – a service that while valuable, is not essential to protecting individuals or preventing immediate harm.

1.18 Funding for services comes from the Council and external agencies including the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). Some of the key services are detailed below. A full list of local DSV services is given at Appendix A.

Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Service

1.19 Barking and Dagenham Public Health commissions a specialist Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Service (currently provided by Hestia) which provides crisis and emergency support to high risk victims of domestic violence. This service provides specialist advocacy to victims ensuring that they access services including: housing, benefits, criminal justice services, education for children, employment and health services. In addition Health deliver advocacy in the maternity setting through mainstream resources.

1.20 In addition to the community IDSV service, the service provides a Children's IDSV co-located in the Children's Services Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. It also now provides a Young Person's IDSV (working with young victims aged 11-18) funded by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).

Supported accommodation for women and children fleeing domestic abuse

1.21 Hestia also provide the Borough's supported accommodation scheme for women and children fleeing domestic abuse. Barking and Dagenham have two borough refuge accommodation sites with a total of 12 bed spaces providing medium to long term accommodation support to victims of domestic violence and their children. This provision is funded by Public Health. The general premise is that women are placed outside of their borough to avoid the risk of future victimisation. This means that boroughs fund provision in their own borough on the assumption that their residents will be able to access other boroughs' provisions.

Victim Support

1.22 Victim Support, funded by Public Health, provides a low to medium risk IDSV Support Service in the community. This provides support to victims who do not meet the threshold for the above services and takes referrals automatically from the Police and via the IDSV service.

Domestic Violence and Hate Crime

- 1.23 These services are coordinated within Adult and Community Services and are funded by Public Health. The service both develops and ensures the delivery of a strategic and coordinated response to domestic violence. Work includes the delivery of domestic violence awareness raising projects, commissioning of external domestic violence services and contract monitoring of existing commissioned services.

MARAC

- 1.24 A Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) has been running in Barking and Dagenham since June 2008. The panel is held monthly to discuss high risk domestic violence cases and is chaired by the Metropolitan Police Community Safety Unit Detective Inspector. MARAC partners share up-to-date case risk information at the conference with a timely assessment of a high risk victim's needs, in order to link clients directly to the provision of appropriate services. A safety plan is implemented for all clients and onward referrals are made where appropriate.
- 1.25 The MARAC operates within a coordinated response model. MARAC data monitoring is maintained locally to record repeat victimisation and domestic violence homicide and is provided quarterly to Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA).

Children's Services Domestic Violence and Troubled Families

- 1.26 Children's services coordinate the response to domestic violence and child sexual exploitation through the Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) group. The group meets on a monthly basis to discuss high profile cases and to review the implementation of the Borough's CSE Strategic and Operational Plan.
- 1.27 As part of the Troubled Families programme, a dedicated resource within Victim Support work with a cohort of 40 families identified by Children's Services where domestic violence is prevalent alongside further complex and multiple needs. This project commenced locally on 1st August 2014 and is funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government on a payment by results basis.
- 1.28 Barking and Dagenham Children's Services are coordinating delivery of a Domestic Violence Children's Treatment Programme endorsed by Against Violence and Abuse (AVA). This programme is aimed at families where domestic violence is no longer present and the non-abusing parent is no longer residing in the family home. The programme is being delivered by Children's Services officers with support from colleagues in partner agencies.

Metropolitan Police

- 1.29 The Metropolitan Police have a number of operations targeted at reducing domestic and sexual violence and bring perpetrators to justice. The 'supporting' operations include:

- Operation Dawn Thunder, a Metropolitan Police Service initiative, is conducted daily to arrest wanted domestic violence suspects in early morning raids;
- a Domestic Violence Crime Advisor (Detective Sergeant) initiative working within a Emergency Response Patrol Team 24/7, which is currently being piloted in Barking and Dagenham; and
- the Police in Barking and Dagenham have also negotiated with the Association of Chief Police Officers to gain lead pilot status for Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO's). The first DVPO in London was issued by Barking and Dagenham and offender breached the Order and was consequently remanded for six weeks. Work to issue further DVPO's is underway.

A full list of Police domestic violence operations is provided at Appendix A.

Awareness Raising – White Ribbon Day

- 1.30 In addition to the programmes above, the Council coordinates awareness raising and learning events across the partnership. Part of this is the high profile White Ribbon Day event held every year in November.
- 1.31 A detailed programme for delivery of awareness raising and learning events is under development for 16 days of action which will be launched at an event in the Town Square on 25th November. LBBDD is an active supporter of the White Ribbon Campaign UK, working to involve men in opposing violence against women. The partnership ensures annual publicity and awareness raising campaigns as part of White Ribbon Day, including:
- 'Walk a Mile in her shoes' event on the 25 November 2014 at 10.30am at Barking Town Hall led by the Leader of the Council; Councillor Darren Rodwell. A just giving page has been set up for the walk to raise money for the local refuge and Victim Support
 - Business Breakfast on the 27 November at 8.30am at Barking Learning Centre with the support of Corporate Alliance Against Domestic Violence (CAADV) to educate local businesses on the impact of domestic violence on business.
 - Plans for awareness raising across Council staff groups supported by portfolio holders
 - On line e-learning module
 - Sessions for front line workers on why victims stay with their abusers

2. Proposal and Issues

- 2.1 This report is for information only, to inform Cabinet of the current level of domestic violence and the services currently available to victims

3. Financial Issues

- 3.1 The current total annual spend for domestic and sexual violence services in the Borough is £650,500.

4. Legal Issues

- 4.1 As explained in the main body of this report, the Council as a Local Authority is required under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to work with other agencies for the

purpose of co-ordination and development of strategies and implementation of those strategies for the reduction of crime and disorder. The Government's definition has its limitations as acts are likely to be criminal in whether taking place in a domestic setting or not and girls under 16 in particular are at risk of forced marriage and genital mutilation, which is of course child abuse.

- 4.2 The Council and its partners intervene addressing those issues for example using their direct powers such as the Children Act 1989, Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 and the Family Law Act as amended by the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

5. Other Issues

- 5.1 **Corporate Policy and Customer Impact** - Domestic and Sexual Violence service provision in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham contributes to delivery of the Community Strategy 13/16 and Corporate Plan 13/14 with the vision to 'Encourage growth and unlock the potential of Barking and Dagenham and its residents'

The priorities strands are:

1. Ensure every child is valued so that they can succeed
2. Reduced crime and the fear of crime
3. Improve health and wellbeing through all stages of life
4. Create thriving communities by maintaining and investing in new and high quality homes
5. Maximise growth opportunities and increase the household income of Borough residents

In addition, the service provision supports the priorities in the Domestic & Sexual Violence Strategy:

1. **PREVENT** domestic and sexual violence from happening in the first place.
2. **PROVIDE SUPPORT** to victims where violence does occur.
3. **REDUCE THE RISK** and **BRING PERPETRATORS TO JUSTICE**.
4. **WORK IN PARTNERSHIP** locally to achieve the best outcomes for victims

- 5.2 **Safeguarding Children** - Domestic Violence effects children as victims and witnesses. This is recognised in the strategic and operational delivery of services across the Council and with its partners.

In terms of Council delivery outside of Children's Social Care, the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is a process which contributes to the wellbeing of children. The MARAC case list is emailed electronically to all MARAC members a week in advance of the panel meeting to enable partners to conduct research on all members of the family; victim, perpetrator and children. This research is then shared at the MARAC panel meeting and any children's safeguarding issues identified result in a referral to children's services.

The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) receives children's safeguarding referrals. This team is supported by an Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence

Advocate who can support families where domestic violence is disclosed as part of the referral.

- 5.3 **Health Issues** - The HWBB recognises that domestic violence impacts negatively on the health and wellbeing of both adults and children. The provision of the services detailed impacts positively on the community by ensuring provision of specialist services within all settings, including front line health care settings.
- 5.4 **Crime and Disorder Issues** - Barking and Dagenham generally experience one of the highest per thousand population number of DV referrals in London month on month. It is a priority with B&D Metropolitan Police and for the Community Safety Partnership. The provision of services detailed contributes to the delivery of the borough Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy and Delivery Plan.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- Health and Wellbeing Report *A Review of Services for Those Affected by Domestic Violence*, 16th July 2013 (<http://moderngov.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=669&Mid=7075&Ver=4>)
- LBBD Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy 2012-15 and plan on a page (<http://moderngov.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=180&MID=6397#A141976>)

List of appendices:

- **Appendix A** - List of DV provision in the borough