

# Community Safety Partnership

## REPORT

**Subject:** Domestic Violence Service Review

**Date:** 6 December 2016

**Author:** Sonia Drozd

**Contact:** [Sonia.drozd@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:Sonia.drozd@lbbd.gov.uk) ext 5455

**Security:** None

---

### 1. Purpose of Presenting the Report

- 1.1 This item is being brought to the Community Safety Partnership meeting to comment and agree priority actions of the Domestic Violence Service Review.

### 2. The Domestic Violence Service Review

- 2.1 Recently the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) undertook a Serious Case Review. One of the recommendations was that:

***.... the local Community Safety Partnership undertake a review of the availability of domestic violence services, with particular reference to those available where there are child protection concerns.***

- 2.2 The Community Safety Partnership agreed to re-visit the previous review and refresh the information.
- 2.3 The Domestic Violence Service Review has been written in a similar format to the previous Review presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board July 2013.
- 2.4 The findings and recommendations from the review should be used to inform future commissioning of domestic abuse services.

- 2.5 Any agreed recommendations will be added to the action plan of the Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy.

### **3. Main findings of the Review**

- 3.1 Perpetrator programmes - Perpetrator work is a noticeable gap area for the borough. Currently the borough does not commission any perpetrator work and only those perpetrators within the criminal justice system are referred to a mandated perpetrator intervention. Evidence suggests that most programmes are costly and yield minimal positive outcomes. However, if the Borough continues to not provide support and intervention for perpetrators the cycle of domestic abuse will be difficult to end.
- 3.2 Training for front line staff - There is a clear need for training for front line services but this needs to be bespoke to different agencies. For example, those working with vulnerable adults need to be skilled in neglect and financial abuse and those working with children need to understand domestic violence, control and coercion.
- 3.3 Links with substance misuse - There is limited evidence to suggest that substance misuse is a causal factor in domestic abuse incidents. However, a local police report has highlighted that Barking and Dagenham has a higher number of reported alcohol use at the time of domestic abuse incidents than the rest of London. The Alcohol Abstinence Monitoring Requirement (sobriety tag) has had successful results for offenders whose alcohol use has impacted on their behaviour. This may be a useful scheme to use for those domestic abuse perpetrators where alcohol is a contributory factor.
- 3.4 Early intervention - Prevention work is imperative to ensure that the cycle of domestic abuse diminishes. Those that have been exposed to domestic abuse require adequate support to give them the coping skills to ensure they do not become the next generation of perpetrator or victim. Similarly, those individuals that have experienced trauma require the same support and coping skills. Young people need to learn about healthy relationships in schools but they also need to know what support is available to them if they need advice and information.
- 3.5 The review highlights the services within the Borough, some of which are commissioned by LBBD and some of which are part of wider consortiums. The services are fully to capacity and the children's domestic abuse service has a waiting list. The Borough could benefit from expanding existing services to allow for wider outreach work amongst the underserved cohorts, for example LGBT and older adults.

### **4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 Following consultation with a number of services the following recommendations have been put forward:
- (i) The existing IDSPA service provided by Victim Support, could benefit from expansion. This would ensure that more specialist support could be provided and it would also give more resources to outreach the underserved cohorts.

- (ii) Commissioners should ensure that pathways between substance misuse and domestic abuse are better linked and that there is provision to work with perpetrators within substance misuse services.
- (iii) External training for front line staff should be commissioned to give front line staff the tools to work with families experiencing domestic abuse. This may prevent more children being removed from the family home.
- (iv) Robust referral pathways into specialist domestic violence services are required in order for front line services to be confident in making repeat referrals. This includes pathways for services that work with adults at risk and LGBT support services.
- (v) To improve early identification of domestic abuse including those young people coming through the criminal justice system, accessing substance misuse services and those young people whose behaviour at school raise concerns.
- (vi) To have sufficient support packages in place for those young people identified as at risk of domestic abuse to prevent them from becoming the next generation of either victim or perpetrator.

## **5. Next steps**

- 5.1 The Domestic and Sexual Violence strategy will incorporate the commissioning priorities agreed at the Community Safety Partnership within the action plan so they can be implemented, monitored and reviewed.

