
SCRUTINY INQUIRY PANEL - REDUCING DOMESTIC ABUSE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2019

Present: Councillors Coombs, Galton, Harwood, Laurent, McEwing, Mitchell and Payne

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

RESOLVED that:

- (i) Councillor McEwing be elected as Chair for the Municipal Year 2018/19; and
- (ii) Councillor Harwood be elected as Vice-Chair for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

2. **DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

Councillor McEwing stated that she attended the Southampton Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategic Group.

3. **INQUIRY TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Panel considered the report of the Director, Legal and Governance recommending that the Panel note the terms of reference and discuss, amend and approve a final version of the outline inquiry project plan.

The Panel noted that paragraph 3 of the report referred to “future of work” this was replaced with “reducing domestic abuse”.

RESOLVED that the terms of reference and outline inquiry project plan be approved subject to an amendment to section 3. Background that deleted the duplicate bullet point.

4. **REDUCING AND PREVENTING PEOPLE FROM BECOMING PERPETRATORS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE IN SOUTHAMPTON - INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND**

The panel received and noted the report of the Director, Legal and Governance requesting that the Panel consider the comments made by the invited guests and use the information provided as evidence in the review.

Following discussion with invited representatives the following information was received:

Sara Kirkpatrick - Research and Services Development Manager, Respect

- A presentation introducing the issue of domestic abuse, risk factors, and the importance of prevention was delivered by Sara Kirkpatrick.
- In addition to the points raised in the presentation, Sara made the following key points:
 - The biggest factor which increases propensity to use abusive behaviour or continue to use abusive behaviour is social acceptance of ‘low level’ abusive or oppressive behaviour.

- Support services for victims and children are vital. Refuges, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) and outreach services save and improve lives every day, and a robust criminal justice system has a crucial role to play in administering justice and protecting current and future victims. But unless communities engage directly with perpetrators, domestic violence will not stop.
- A number of initiatives had been shown to decrease incidents of intimate partner abuse. These included awareness raising campaigns and leadership.
- Working directly with perpetrators had delivered promising results. The CARA early intervention model delivered by Hampton Trust was referenced as an example of good practice.
- As the appetite for innovation and a broader range of solutions to challenge or disrupt abusive behaviour increases these innovations should be developed in consultation and cooperation with survivor services.
- The recent Government publication Transforming the Response to Domestic Abuse Consultation Response and Draft Bill contains some elements that may help to levels of reduce domestic abuse. This includes the introduction of regulations and statutory guidance for schools on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education.

Dan King - Service Lead, Intelligence and Strategic Analysis, SCC
 Karen Marsh – IDVA Service Manager, SCC

- A presentation providing the Panel with an overview of domestic abuse in Southampton was delivered by Dan King and Karen Marsh.
- In addition to the points raised in the presentation, the following key points were made:
 - A detailed Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment was being undertaken by the Intelligence and Strategic Analysis Team to inform the next iteration of the Southampton Domestic and Sexual Abuse Multi-Agency Strategy.
 - Southampton had a very high domestic abuse reporting rate in Southampton.
 - Over 3,000 domestic violence crimes were recorded by Hampshire Constabulary for Southampton in 2017/18. Figures rose 7% last year, the 4th consecutive year it has increased in Southampton.
 - The highest recorded rates of domestic violence and abuse were in the most deprived communities in Southampton.
 - Southampton has a strong multi-agency response that is victim focused.
 - Volume of high risk referrals continues to rise.

The Panel noted that:

- Southampton has a very high domestic abuse reporting rate and this figure continues to rise.
- Support services for victims and children are vital. Refuges, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) and outreach services save and improve lives every day, and a robust criminal justice system has a crucial role to play in

administering justice and protecting current and future victims. But unless communities engage directly with perpetrators, domestic violence will not stop.

- A number of initiatives have been shown to decrease incidents of intimate partner abuse. These include Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes working in partnership with support services and prevention work, such as awareness raising campaigns.

RESOLVED that the comments made by Sara Kirkpatrick - Research and Services Development Manager, Respect; Dan King - Service Lead, Intelligence and Strategic Analysis, Southampton City Council; and Karen Marsh – IDVA Service Manager, Southampton City Council be noted and used as evidence in the review.