
SCRUTINY INQUIRY PANEL - REDUCING DOMESTIC ABUSE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 MARCH 2019

Present: Councillors McEwing (Chair), Harwood (Vice-Chair), Galton, Coombs, Laurent, Mitchell and Payne

7. **REDUCING AND PREVENTING PEOPLE FROM BECOMING PERPETRATORS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE IN SOUTHAMPTON - INNOVATION AND BEST PRACTICE**

The Panel considered the report of the Director, Legal and Governance, which in accordance with the inquiry plan, requested that the Panel considered the comments made by the invited guests and used the information provided as evidence in the review.

Following discussions with invited representatives the following information was received:

Phil Bullingham – Service Lead for Safeguarding, Improvement, Governance & Compliance, Children and families, SCC

- A presentation outlining the range of support services provided by the Children and Families Service to reduce domestic abuse in Southampton was delivered by Phil Bullingham.
- In addition to the points raised in the presentation, Phil made the following key points:
 - The High Risk Domestic Abuse (HRDA) response was embedded in the Multi-Agency Children’s Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
 - A number of programmes worked with children to help them to recover from the adverse effects of being exposed to parental domestic abuse including Domestic Abuse Recovering Together (DART) (7-14 year olds) and Sure Start Special (Under 5’s).
 - DART, led and coordinated by Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA), together with Women’s Aid and Southampton City Council (SCC) family support workers, is designed to build positive mother and child relationships – thus helping to stop inter-generational abuse, promote positive family relationships and to prevent escalation in safeguarding.
 - Sure Start Special is a unique joint project with Southampton’s Women’s Aid and Southampton Sure Start Children’s Centres funded by Children in Need. It is a new project for children who have been exposed to parental domestic violence and abuse. It is an early intervention programme for both children aged 3 or 4 years and their mother/carer.
 - Young perpetrators – The Youth Offending Service use Asset Plus assessment tool which includes consideration of domestic abuse in families.
 - Training has been delivered to staff, inclusive of voluntary and community sector agencies, working in Children’s, Health, Housing, Community Safety or Adult Services on restorative practices, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE’s) and trauma.

- This suite of training supports a pan-Hampshire ambition to create a 'whole system approach' that supports our workforce to work restoratively with children, families and vulnerable adults; at the same time as having a greater awareness and understanding of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experience, trauma and the effects of parental conflict.
- Investment has been put into the extended locality model. Upskilling staff that work in the community delivering early intervention / early help services to capture and engage at an early stage on issues such as domestic abuse, mental health and substance abuse.
- Engagement by perpetrators is hit and miss. Engaging with them early is challenging. It often requires the intervention of the Police or courts before perpetrators engage.
- There is a need for additional resources in perpetrator services. The provision is good but minimal at present.
- Would welcome Hampton Trust being embedded within the HRDA to help improve engagement with perpetrators.

Grace Grove – Public Health Practitioner, SCC

- A presentation outlining the findings from a literature review of effective practice in preventing people from becoming future perpetrators of domestic abuse was delivered by Grace Grove.
- In addition to the points raised in the presentation, Grace made the following key points:
 - A full needs assessment for domestic abuse was being undertaken. A draft will be ready for September 2019.
 - Evidence was limited but developing with regards to the effectiveness of perpetrator services and actions that reduce domestic abuse. No Public Health return on investment statistics exist in this area.
 - Risk factors for intimate partner violence were identified.
 - Prevention activity was classified into three areas: Primary- preventing someone from ever perpetrating; Secondary- intervening after first occurrence to stop it happening again and minimising the harm to others; Tertiary – stopping serial perpetrators from continuing to perpetrate and minimising the harm to others.
 - A summary of effective practice, given the limited evidence base, against each of the three stages was provided. There was agreement on the key approaches, these include approaches that consider:
 - Whole system (risk factors)
 - Life course (opportunities to intervene at key stages)
 - Universal primary prevention
 - Targeting the risk factors can help to prevent people from becoming perpetrators. There is recognition that improving work with perpetrators will help to reduce domestic abuse, but to significantly decrease risk there is a need to work at a whole population level.
 - There is a need to consider our relationship with risk factors (including alcohol and mental health) and to change culture in society away from unhealthy and abusive values, attitudes and behaviours and to encourage increased stigma against those associated with perpetrator behaviours. A key role for Public Health.

Mark Pirnie – Scrutiny Manager, SCC

- A presentation summarising the key elements of the draft Domestic Abuse Bill was presented to the Panel.
- It was recognised that, whilst the draft Bill is predominantly victim focussed, each section of the draft Bill provides opportunities to reduce domestic abuse in Southampton.
- The draft Bill included a commitment to introduce regulations and statutory guidance for schools to educate young people on relationships. In primary schools the Government wants to equip children with the foundations for healthy, respectful relationships and in secondary schools the Government proposes the teaching of young people about healthy intimate relationships, sexual exploitation, consent and domestic abuse.
- The draft Bill included ambitions to raise public awareness of abuse; to challenge the social attitudes that allow domestic abuse to occur; to work with partners to review, evaluate and understand current communication activities, which will help inform future communications; and to work to tackle harmful gender norms.
- The draft Bill included reference to a number of reviews to be conducted, including research into the links between domestic abuse and substance misuse, alcohol and mental health.
- Additional resources had been identified to deliver specific initiatives. The Bill presents an opportunity for Southampton to work with Government.

Sandra Jerrim – Senior Commissioner, Integrated Commissioning Unit

- A presentation was delivered on substance misuse and mental health pathways in Southampton.
- Both Substance Misuse and Mental Health Services had strong awareness of the issue of domestic and sexual abuse and the referral routes for survivor services supporting victims of domestic abuse. Limited awareness exists of perpetrator services and pathways.
- There was a need to raise awareness and knowledge about perpetrator services and the referral routes.
- The presentation also included an evaluation against Respect's good practice criteria. There was recognition that Southampton has a strong suite of survivor services and that perpetrator services compare favourably against any other city in the UK. However, there was a need to get perpetrators engaged with behaviour change services as early as possible and to drive up demand for these services.

RESOLVED that the comments made by the Southampton City Council Officers, Phil Bullingham – Service Lead for Safeguarding, Improvement, Governance & Compliance, Children and families, Grace Grove – Public Health Practitioner, Mark Pirnie – Scrutiny Manager, and Sandra Jerrim – Senior Commissioner, Integrated Commissioning Unit be noted and used as evidence in the review.