

Priority 4

Improving Health through Housing

4.1 Tackling Domestic Violence and Abuse

Domestic violence and abuse continues to be a major issue affecting people living and working in Leeds. It affects communities regardless of geography, relative affluence and ethnicity. It is a factor behind a high proportion of children, especially those under 5, being taken into care. Recognising the significance of this issue, the Council has made Domestic Violence and Abuse one of its key priorities.

The Council has recently carried out a Scrutiny Inquiry, involving the police, other statutory, voluntary and private sector partners into how the city responds to domestic violence and abuse. The inquiry recommendations are, through a partnership approach, to better meet the needs of people experiencing domestic violence, to maximise opportunities to prevent domestic violence and to deal effectively with perpetrators.

Case Study

Ms B was referred to a multi-agency meeting as she was a victim of domestic violence. A co-ordinated response between housing, the police and other statutory services ensured that the victim was rehoused and new security measures, including alarms and secure locks, installed at the new property as soon as possible. In future, new arrangements will be in place to assist victims of domestic violence and abuse on a daily basis. The new arrangements will include representation from multi-agency partners to ensure that response times are even quicker.

Actions

- 1 Launch Leeds Domestic Violence and Abuse Breakthrough Project in early 2015
- 2 Ensure housing is a key part of the Domestic Violence and Abuse arrangements in the new Leeds Safeguarding Partnership
- 3 Ensure housing information is included in the new Domestic Violence and Abuse website
- 4 Review and improve practice relating to the housing of perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse
- 5 Identify, communicate and implement housing related lessons learned from Domestic Homicide Reviews
- 6 Ensure housing needs assessments are carried out on the same day that a case is referred to the new Leeds Safeguarding Partnership
- 7 Deliver a Sanctuary scheme, provision of home security measures, that is free of charge, across all housing tenures, with works completed within 72 hours
- 8 Increase public awareness of domestic violence and abuse and increase knowledge of the support available within housing.



Targets

- Services deliver a fully informed, integrated, multi-agency response to Domestic Violence and Abuse
- More people are aware of the harms and risks associated with Domestic Violence and Abuse
- Service and interventions are meeting service user needs and expectations
- More consistent and better developed responses to perpetrators of violence