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Report of: Director of Environment and Housing

Report to: Environment and Housing Scrutiny Board

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Subject: Domestic Violence & Abuse Breakthrough Project

Are specific electoral wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. To provide a summary of the work taken forward as part of the Domestic Violence Breakthrough Project.

1. Purpose of this report

Domestic Violence and abuse has been named as one of the council's 8 breakthrough projects. This report provides an outline of work to be delivered as part of the breakthrough project and progress to date.

2. Background information

Domestic violence and abuse has significant impact on the lives of many children and families in the city.

In the 12 months up to May 2016 there were 16705 incidents reported to the police and children were present in about a third of these cases. Out of these incidents 36% involved repeat victims.

Domestic violence has been a significant factor in 24 deaths in the city since 2011. This includes 5 children and 3 subsequent deaths/suicides of the alleged perpetrator. It has also been identified as a key factor in children becoming looked after with a study in 2013 highlighting it as a factor in 66% of babies under one becoming looked after.

In recognition of the importance and complexity of the issue domestic violence and abuse was named, in early 2015, as one of the council's breakthrough projects.

The aim of these projects is to bring LCC directorates, partner organisations, communities and individuals together in new way to tackle issues that will have the biggest impact on the people of Leeds. The breakthrough project provides an opportunity to build on the significant work that has taken place in the city on this issue over a number of years and identifying ways to do things differently for lasting change.

Some of the key factors that will make a difference include:

- Working together to develop a joined up and co-ordinated response
- Working at scale- ensuring messages reach a significant proportion of our citizens and workforce.
- Working with new partners and communities
- Transforming the way we work with families through developing and embedding restorative and family focussed approaches throughout the workforce
- Developing earlier and innovative interventions
- Being outcome focussed.

3. Main Issues

Cllr Blake formally launched the domestic violence breakthrough project in March 2105 with an Outcome Based Accountability Session. This was attended by over 150 delegates from a number of organisations. This was quickly followed by a conference designed to engage with businesses and the private sector. This again was attended by over 130 delegates. A follow up OBA session and planning session for Members have also been held.

All of these events have generated enormous enthusiasm and momentum in the city and the ideas and suggestions have been used to develop a refreshed action plan for the city.

A key element of the new plan will be developing an integrated city wide approach which harnesses and co-ordinates the resources in the city to improve the safety and support for victims and their children and provide challenge and opportunities to perpetrators to change their behaviour.

In recognition of the importance and complexity of the issue the Safer and Stronger Scrutiny Board undertook a wide-ranging and extensive enquiry into Domestic Violence and Abuse. The inquiry involved taking evidence from a wide range of partners, providers and services for both victims and perpetrators along with victims and perpetrators themselves.

The inquiry resulted in 29 recommendations which have been actioned by the council and key partners. These recommendations have directly influenced the development and delivery of the Domestic Violence Breakthrough Project.

Progress against recommendations is now being overseen by the Environment and Housing Scrutiny Board.

The plan has also been informed by the Domestic Violence and Abuse Scrutiny Inquiry.

The plan is scheduled to be discussed and agreed at the council's Executive Board in September; the key themes and initiatives that will be delivered as part of the plan are highlighted below.

3.1 Supporting Victims (adults, children and families)

A cornerstone in how the city responds to domestic violence was the development of the Front Door Safeguarding Hub (FDSH). The FDSH became operational in April 2015 and since this time over 2,500 high risk cases have been discussed.

This new and innovative way of working allows for effective and timely partnership responses to cases of domestic violence reported to the police. The partnership process at the FDSH allows for better ways to manage risk and provide support and interventions to victims, children and perpetrators. The process has led to improved information sharing, reduced duplication and produced clear action plans for the cases discussed to date.

Recent developments at the FDSH have included integrating the monthly domestic violence MARAC (multi agency risk assessment conference) into the daily meetings. This means that MARAC cases can now be heard within a few days of referral instead of up to a month as was the case before April 2016.

The FDSH has also established a new process to provide better support to children affected by domestic violence. This was rolled out across the city from the 18th April 2016. This followed a successful pilot in 3 clusters, and involves notifying schools and educational establishments when one of their pupils has been present at an incident of domestic violence where the police have attended. This notification is done the following morning; ideally before the start of the school day.

The purpose of the notification is not to duplicate or replace any safeguarding interventions that may occur as a result of the police intervention, but to provide information to schools

so that they can better support the pupil the next day in whatever way is appropriate. The process is always followed in conjunction with current safeguarding procedures and guidelines.

A protocol for the project has been drawn up. This protocol includes information on the type of responses that schools/ teachers may wish to consider. As part of the protocol schools are being asked to write to parents to inform them about their participation in the scheme. This initiative was as a result of a specific recommendation from the Domestic Violence Scrutiny Board Inquiry. Initial feedback from schools indicates that the process is working well. Below is some of the feedback received during the pilot from schools about the outcomes for children and Families and from parents receiving the letter about the process.

"We received the notification even before the child got to school"

"We were able to tell the class teacher to keep an eye on the child."

"We chatted to the child and played alongside her to see if she was ok"

"We were not aware of the DV before and it helped us understand what else might be going on for the family."

"I spoke to Mum and was able to offer her some support."

One parent said it was a really good idea, they had witnessed DV as a child and this would have helped them then"

Specific support has also been put in place for young people between 16 and 25 (with a focus on 16 to 18). A specific post has been established at the FDSH to undertake case work with victims and instigators of violence. The post holder will also develop resources and pathways for young people experiencing domestic violence.

The FDSH continues to be joined up with other key work being taken forward under the Families First and Family Valued programmes such as Family Group Conferencing (FGC) which has been extended to include families experiencing domestic violence and abuse, working restoratively with families to enable them to safely make decisions and move forward in a safe and supportive environment. A pathway from the Front Door Safeguarding Hub directly to the Family Group Conference has been established to support the timely use of this approach in appropriate domestic violence cases.

Domestic violence is now one of the 6 eligibility criteria for the Families First programme. The programme will enable families who are experiencing multiple issues including domestic violence to be identified quickly and for support to be co-ordinated. It is established that all families discussed at the front door meeting are accepted as being part of the Families First cohort.

A refreshed action plan for the FDSH is being developed but will include;

- Considering options to establish a seven day a week model.
- Establishing a process to inform GPs of high risk domestic violence incidents reported to the police. Two additional staff have been recruited to the CCG to assist with this.

Responding to Standard Risk

A pilot to trial monthly meetings for standard and medium (without crime) risk cases of domestic violence and abuse went live on 27th April 2016. The meetings have been attached to the existing Guidance and Support meetings already chaired by the Targeted Services Leader to reduce any staffing impact on services.

Housing Leeds, West Yorkshire Police, Forward Leeds, Adult Social Care, Children's Centres, Schools and the Cluster were all in attendance and Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS), Probation and Leeds & Yorkshire Foundation Trust (LYFT) have agreed to attend the future meetings. Initial responses were positive overall, but there is some work to be done on supporting all front line colleagues to realise the benefits of this new way of working. Work is taking place in the coming month to build the confidence of all agencies and a Front Door Safeguarding Hub Chair has agreed to take on the police Co-Chair role for the initial pilot period so that the learning and experience of the Front Door can be used to develop the Locality meetings.

Commissioning Review

A review of domestic violence and abuse services has been carried out by the Council and its strategic partners. Key drivers for the review included: the wider programme of work around domestic violence and abuse including recommendations resulting from the June 2014 Council Scrutiny enquiry; learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews; new partnership arrangements developed to respond to incidents of domestic violence and abuse; growing emphasis on restorative practice and family group conferencing as a way of enabling families to change and reject violent or abusive behaviours; and forthcoming expiry of existing contracts for domestic violence and abuse services in Leeds.

The review provided an opportunity to make sure that commissioned services have the capacity and flexibility to provide the necessary support and also provided the opportunity to develop a more integrated approach that is aligned with the work of the Front Door Safeguarding Hub. This review has been undertaken in consultation with service users, service providers and wider stakeholders and included 2 OBA events and a stakeholder workshop. The review has highlighted a number of principles and key features that a new model for Domestic Violence and Abuse services should include.

The procurement stage is now underway with tenders currently being evaluated. The new service will be in place from 1st April 2017.

GP Pilot

Following lessons learnt from Domestic Homicide Reviews and recommendations given in the 2014 Domestic Violence & Abuse Scrutiny report; a project was developed to support GP's to routinely ask all of their female patients on appointment if they are experiencing domestic violence or abuse, and to give them a method of recording this on their systems and signposting. A digital resource has been developed to enable doctors to undertake training in their surgery. The approach is currently being piloted in 4 surgeries across the city. Initial feedback from a focus group of domestic abuse survivors is that they would have welcomed being asked in this way.

Training has also been provided to over 300 GPs as part of the TARGET training programme and from this a further 27 practices have expressed interest in this approach. Further training is being delivered in partnership with the CCGs.

Digital Responses

As part of the Smart City approach work is currently in progress to investigate ways in which new technology could be used to help the victims of domestic violence

A second strand of this work is to create a piece of technology which customer facing staff can use to easily access contact details, leaflets and information on a wide variety of topics, including domestic violence, in order to advise customers. The aim is to provide a system which could ultimately be available on all council computers and on self-service devices in public offices to enable everyone to find information quickly and easily in one interaction.

An Innovation Lab was held in May with a number of professionals, representatives of a domestic violence support group and IT technologists working together to create the ideas for three potential prototypes which could be used to improve the experience of domestic violence and abuse victims at their time of crisis.

The three ideas were then developed and those from the Support group together with colleagues from Children's Services and Safer Leeds agreed on a brief for the one tool which technologists have been tasked with developing into a prototype.

The idea is to use a common and readily available free gaming app for smart phones and create a code which can be keyed into the game allowing the user to access a second secret platform. This second platform will have information about services in the immediate local area to the user, as well as a log for incidents of abuse and a storage facility for them to keep photographs of important documents, such as passport numbers. If they came to want to leave their situation, they could use this and know where they could go, have a log of incidents for prosecution purposes and access to all of the important documents needed that they wouldn't necessarily be able to pack when leaving.

The game would revert back to playable mode as soon as the phone screen was closed so that if the phone was taken away by the abuser for checking, all they would see is a part played game. The intention is that the code could be given to victims of abuse by domestic violence support workers, but also by GP's, linking in with the Routine Enquiry GP work which is also being undertaken by the Breakthrough Project.

3.2 Challenging behaviours (working with perpetrators)

Traditional responses to domestic violence have primarily focussed on supporting the victim. Whilst this is extremely important we will not address the root causes of domestic violence or protect subsequent victims unless we challenge the behaviour of the perpetrator.

The Front Door has allowed us to engage in new ways with perpetrators; offering assessments and opportunities to engage whilst in police custody.

The city's Integrated Offender Management programme is also being reshaped to respond to domestic violence perpetrators with over 60 offenders having been taken onto caseload on release from prison or referred via the FDSH.

The parenting programme, Caring Dads, has been successfully taken on by Children's Services having been piloted by Safer Leeds. 3 Caring Dads Groups started in March 2016 and are near the end of their 17 week programme. A facilitators training course will be held in early autumn with the next set of courses starting in October. Recruitment has taken place for additional staff for Caring Dad's funded through the Family Valued Programme. This includes Programme Manager, Peer Mentor development worker and BME development worker and programme support

A second programme, Choices, has been commissioned by the Police and Crime Commissioner. Whilst a West Yorkshire Programme it has been developed locally to provide a clear referral pathway from the FDSH and a Conditional Caution pathway for West Yorkshire Police. 42 Leeds clients are currently on the programme. There is capacity for more and work is ongoing to increase referrals.

3.3 Changing attitudes and perceptions (individuals and communities)

Leeds Domestic Violence & Abuse website

A new website www.leedsdomesticviolenceandabuse.gov.uk has been established to provide a one stop shop of information for victims, perpetrators, children and practitioners in the city. Statistics show that traffic to the site is building month on month with 1,706 page views in January 2016 and 2,075 in February. Next steps are to continue to promote use of the website and ensure it is linked to all of Leeds' domestic violence work.

"Get Comfortable" campaign

The "Get Comfortable" campaign was launched in November 2015 as part of the national '16 days of action'. The aim of the campaign was to encourage people to think, talk and ask questions about domestic violence and abuse and to increase awareness and understanding of support available.

The campaign was informed by engagement and consultation with a number of individuals and focus groups- including the citizen's panel and has allowed for a number of issues to be explored. Taking a different direction to usual advertising a campaign was commissioned which saw a number of static themed materials, such as cushions and sofas, being distributed to public places across the city.

In one month the campaign reached 1.44million people on Twitter, 39,750 via the council Facebook page and had over 3,000 page views on the Website. This level of engagement led us to continue the campaign with a series of blogs detailing people's personal experiences and service responses to domestic violence. Discussions are ongoing to develop Phase 2 of the campaign.

The site also links to the Get Comfortable talking about it campaign site.

Leeds Rhinos DV Song.

Work has been undertaken in three primary schools to write and perform a song about domestic violence. This was performed by over 100 children at Headingley Stadium in April 2016. The work was funded as part of the Family Valued programme and involved Behind Closed Doors. The song is available to all schools via a website and can also be used for conferences training.

The Rhinos Foundation are also planning an OBA style event to consider options to link their DV work, Public Health work and Educational work with children. A steering group will be formed to oversee this work to which LCC will be invited.

3.4 Enabling Effective Change (workforce and organisational response)

Training / Domestic Violence Quality Mark (DVQM)

An extensive programme of domestic violence training including lessons learnt from Domestic Violence Homicide Reviews continues to be provided in the city. Over the last quarter this has included.

- Adult Social Care (Operations) has attained the DVQM. A programme of training is now being rolled out to staff and a process to introduce routine questioning is being developed.
- A DHR lessons learnt briefing was delivered to LCC Housing Managers in May. LCC Housing Services are working towards attaining the DV QM.
- A series of training sessions have been held in April / May through the LCC Manager Challenge Programme to support the introduction of the LCC Domestic Violence and Abuse policy.
- Training has been delivered to over 300 GPs during May as part of the Safeguarding Children Target Training. The session was co delivered by the LCC DV team and a GP involved in the GP practice pilot. From this 27 GPs surgeries have requested additional training. NHS England have expressed interest in the Leeds GP routine enquiry pilot and invited the DV team to present at a national conference.
- A series of training programmes for midwives have also been delivered during April/ May.

Domestic Violence Ambassadors & HR Champions

A group of Ambassadors has been established, with initial members volunteering through the Manager Challenge programme, but the programme is intended to grow throughout the organisation with all teams being encouraged to nominate an Ambassador to become part of this network. The Ambassadors will be kept abreast of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV & A) related developments via a quarterly newsletter, as well as being sent any promotional materials to display or share amongst their teams.

The Ambassadors are offered training courses as available to give them grounding in DV & A issues to allow them to answer basic questions from team mates and promote good practice within their teams, they will also be given contact details for the Councils HR Champions so that they can signpost where appropriate. The HR Champions are a complimentary scheme established by the Safer Leeds Domestic Violence Team as part of

the council's new Domestic Violence & Abuse HR policy. HR Champions are trained to a greater depth of understanding and are able to offer support and guidance to colleagues experiencing domestic violence.

4. Conclusions

2015/16 has seen significant progress made in creating new approaches to tackling Domestic Violence and Abuse which establishes a solid foundation to build on in the coming financial year.

A key piece of work this year will be the development of an outcomes framework and clear, measurable success measures for the project.

5. Recommendations

The Environment and Housing Scrutiny Board are asked to:

- Note the contents of this report.
- Provide comment on progress achieved.