

Report of Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate

Report to South Leeds (Inner) Area Committee

Date: Wednesday 9th January 2012

Subject: Domestic Violence in Inner South Leeds

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	Beeston & Holbeck City & Hunslet Middleton Park	
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?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:		

Summary of main issues and corporate governance considerations

1. This report gives a summary overview of the level of domestic violence in Inner South Leeds and summarises specialist service provision and initiatives to address the issues.

Recommendations

2. The Area Committee is asked to:
 - a) note the contents of the report and make comment as appropriate.

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To bring to Members' attention an overview of the levels of reported domestic violence in Inner South Leeds. It also provides information on specialist services and initiatives that are available to residents to offer support around the issue and improve service responses.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 Members will recall at the September 2012 Area Committee, the annual Community Safety report was presented. At that meeting, a request was made for a more detailed analysis of Domestic Violence levels and issues in order that Members can explore the issue through informed discussion. This report is a starting point for that discussion.
- 2.2 The Safer Leeds Executive at their November 2012 meeting agreed to make domestic violence a priority. As work progresses strategically, Members will be updated. In 2010 a Domestic Violence Profile for the city was produced. This is currently being updated and will be presented to Members in the future. The information contained in this report, is drawn from the draft version of the profile.

3.0 The extent of domestic violence in Inner South Leeds

3.1 Reported Domestic Violence in Leeds

This section presents key figures from West Yorkshire Police and Accident and Emergency data to give a brief summary of the domestic violence incidents that are reported to both bodies across Leeds. It should be noted that domestic violence is often under reported and national research indicates that victims are assaulted an average of 35 times before reporting the abuse to outside agencies.

3.2 Key figures from West Yorkshire Police crime data

- During 2011, there were almost 14,000 domestic related *incidents* reported to the police across Leeds with approximately 4000 of them in City and Holbeck Division.
- There were approximately 4000 domestic related *crimes* in the same period across Leeds. Domestic Violence accounted for 33.6% of violent crimes in City and Holbeck Division.
- There were 5 domestic homicides and 192 MARAC cases in Leeds during 2011.
- Children were present at 4,966 incidents of domestic violence during 2011 which is an increase of 24% compared to the previous twelve month period. As some households have more than one child, each incident is potentially witnessed by more than one child. So the number of children recorded as being present is 6145. This has changed significantly compared with 4,233 children present at the time of the last profile.
- The age group for victims most likely to be assaulted appears to be between the ages of 18 and 24.
- Analysis of victims by gender reveal that, over the period, 79% were female and 20% were male, with a small minority unknown. Further work is needed to determine how much of this is retaliatory violence.
- The majority of both suspects and victims were of English / UK nationality, which was consistent across the three divisions. Polish and Pakistani nationalities were the second highest nationality for both suspects and victims, although the percentages remained at 2% or below.

- A Dwelling was by far the most common location where the majority of domestic violence incidents took place with 91% of Incidents. Secondary locations were Public / Open Spaces and Public Houses.
- Alcohol was the most frequently cited contributing factor, accounting for 49% of incidents and 46% of crimes in the most recent period compared with 52% incidents at the time of the last profile. Drugs contributed to about 8% of incidents and 7% of crimes, which is an increase of around 5% from the time of the last profile.

3.3 Key figures from Accident and Emergency Data

- Accident and Emergency assault records showed 7.1% were identified as domestic related during 2011 in Leeds.
- The key locations where incidents took place were: 42% in the street, 16% in a bar / pub / club or in or near licensed premises, 15% in the home, 5% in someone else's home and 3% in the workplace. Although this would appear to be a reversal of the proportions found in police records it is more likely indicative of the 'presentation' of the admission at reception with those being assaulted in public being more likely to be brought to A&E by witnesses and potentially those being assaulted in the home being less likely to reveal the exact circumstances of how they sustained their injuries, particularly if accompanied to the hospital by their partners.
- As with police records, alcohol was the most frequently cited contributory factor, noted in 54% of cases. Other contributory factors were drugs (3%), and mental health problems (2%).

3.4 Reported Domestic Violence in South Leeds

This section of the report presents information relating to levels of domestic violence in Inner South Leeds wards during 2011.

3.5 Beeston and Holbeck (Ward 5)

80% of domestic crimes in this ward were violent crimes in the period studied – the highest proportion identified outside the city centre. The proportion of Common Assaults recorded within the data is higher than in most other wards across the city. The areas around Holbeck and Beeston Hill either side of Elland Road and the M621 are particularly affected by domestic incidents with another area of concern being around the Dulvertons and Cottingleys. 17% of postal addresses were repeat crime locations with the data.

3.6 Middleton Park (Ward 23)

This area has high numbers of violent domestic offences – 69% in the period studied. The Ward also has notably higher domestic-related criminal damage reports than other areas of the city. Domestic incidents are most prevalent in Middleton itself on the estates off Thorpe Road, the Manor Farms and the Sissons / Middleton Park areas with high levels of incidents. Belle Isle also has high levels of domestic violence. Levels of repeat addresses within the crime data were at twenty two percent.

3.7 City and Hunslet (Ward 10)

City (Ward 10A) – Another high proportion of domestic violent crimes – 81% in the period studied – but only two of the repeat locations within the City were residential addresses.

Hunslet (Ward 10B) – A lower proportion of Violent Crimes than its city centre neighbour – 70% in the period studied. 18% of postal addresses were repeat crime locations. The areas around Beeston Hill are particularly affected which corresponds with the findings for Beeston & Holbeck Ward as the areas border each other.

4.0 **The responses to Domestic Violence in Inner South Leeds**

- 4.1 The Safer Leeds Executive meeting in November 2012 agreed to make reducing Domestic Violence one of its strategic priorities. This will allow for greater focus around the issue that will strengthen the delivery of the Domestic Violence Strategy. The key challenges identified are developing work with perpetrators, developing work with Children's Services through the Cluster arrangements, workforce development and reducing risk and repeat victimisation.
- 4.2 Leeds City Council provides or commissions three key services to address domestic violence. The LCC Domestic Violence Team is responsible for developing the strategy to address domestic violence and providing training to services across Leeds. The Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS) is a consortium of providers offering a range of residential, outreach support, advocacy and legal support to women experiencing violence via a free and confidential helpline. The Domestic Abuse Scheme Safer Leeds (DASSL) takes referrals from Children's Social Work Service (CSWS) for men who pose a risk to families who are either subject to a Child Protection Plan or at risk of being subject to a plan.
- 4.3 There are a wide range of voluntary sector agencies providing services to all victims and perpetrators across Leeds, in specific localities and for target groups. Examples include Leeds Women's Aid and HALT who provide services for women victims. Start Treating Others Positively (STOP) is a Leeds organisation which runs male perpetrators groups and anger management groups for women. Health For All also provides a limited service for men who are perpetrators of domestic abuse in south Leeds. It should be acknowledged that the level of provision around domestic violence, especially in relation to programmes for perpetrators, is small in comparison to the level of need.
- 4.3 The Inner South Area Committee has funded Women's Health Matters to set up and run a support group for women who are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence. This group is currently attended by 8 women and the WHM staff are steadily building referral networks to ensure that their service can be accessed by women from across Inner South.
- 4.4 Further activity in South Leeds is focussed via the Alcohol and Domestic Violence plan. This has three key aims:
 - Preventing violence through early intervention and challenging attitudes.
 - Improving the provision of services through joining up services around domestic violence and alcohol.

- Working in partnership to achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

Successful activity to address the first two priorities has been delivered during 2011/12. This includes delivery of a joint awareness campaign during November 2012 around Domestic Violence and alcohol issues. The Police Safeguarding team have received training and a process has been established to allow referrals from them to ADS (Addiction Dependency Solutions – an alcohol treatment provider commissioned by the NHS). Reciprocal training has been done between the Leeds Domestic Violence team and ADS to improve awareness of the overlap of issues. As a result, ADS have achieved the Domestic Violence Quality Mark and the Leeds Domestic Violence Team have developed a multi agency training programme that specifically addresses the inter-relationship of Domestic Violence and alcohol. The Domestic Violence team and Platform (a voluntary sector service for young people with substance abuse issues) have delivered awareness sessions to service providers working with young people on these issues.

- 4.5 To address the third priority “*Working in partnership to achieve the best possible outcomes for children*” a Whole Cluster approach is being piloted in the JESS, Bramley and Seacroft Manston Clusters. Briefly this involves developing ways of working in order that co-ordinated support can be provided to families via the Targeted Services Leader role and the Cluster Guidance and Support meetings. To date this has included the secondment of a Social Worker to work alongside the Police Safeguarding Unit to develop processes that will ensure appropriate support is offered to families where a domestic violence incident has been reported to the police and there are children in the household. Once established, it is anticipated that the Social Worker will be able to direct medium risk cases to the Cluster in order that support can be provided via local networks. In order to support Clusters to be able to take on this role, all schools in the JESS Cluster have received additional training on understanding and responding to Domestic Violence and have now identified Domestic Violence “Champions” within each school who can support staff in addressing the issue with families. This work is in its infancy with further workforce development issues to be addressed and processes to be put in place that will allow an effective response to Domestic Violence at an early stage.
- 4.6 Furthermore, the issue of the lack of resource to support and work with male perpetrators needs to be addressed. Schools have identified this as a critical need for them in responding directly to known cases of Domestic Violence. Further work is needed to explore how programmes of work can be developed to respond to this need.
- 4.7 Members will be aware of the development of the Families First Leeds (FFL) programme that seeks to support 1800 families over 3 years to reduce offending and antisocial behaviour, improve attendance at school and support parents to move into work. As part of the process for identifying families, a local discretionary category has been used headed Safeguarding/Health. This includes domestic violence offences reported to West Yorkshire Police. Further work is being done by the Safer Leeds intelligence team to understand the prevalence of domestic violence within the FFL cohort of families and this will be used to influence commissioning and co-ordination of services.

5.0 Key and emerging issues

5.1 Change in legislation to include 16/17 year olds

The Home Office has changed the definition of domestic violence offences to include those committed by or to 16 & 17 year olds. Given that the age group with the highest reported rates of domestic violence under the old definition was 18-24, it is likely that reporting will be high amongst this age group also. Further work will be needed to determine how best to respond to this change in legislation. The definition will also impact on the reporting of violence from child to parent. In recognition of this, the Youth Offending Service is developing training for staff in dealing with child to parent violence.

5.2 Welfare reform – potential impact

The Governments Welfare Reform changes that are due to take effect from April 2013 will have an impact on many families in Inner South Leeds. The table below shows the numbers of families that will be affected:

Ward	Number of cases affected	Annual value of benefit reduction
Beeston and Holbeck	324	£ 159,427.20
City and Hunslet	225	£ 124,862.29
Middleton Park	565	£ 306,943.60

Whilst there is no evidence to support a causal link between stress or financial worry with an increase in incidents of domestic violence, it is likely that one effect will be increased tension within families. The reduction in income or changes in circumstances however, may present barriers to exiting the violence or accessing support for families.

5.3 BME communities

As alluded to in 3.1.1, the level of reported Domestic Violence incidents in BME communities is lower than would be expected from a group of that size. More work is needed to understand the barriers to reporting may exist especially around emerging communities and developing responses to address those barriers. The South Leeds Alcohol and Domestic Violence group have acknowledged this need and will be developing a programme of work in the near future.

6.0 Corporate Considerations

6.1 Consultation and Engagement

6.1.1 There are no consultation or engagement implications in this report

6.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

6.2.1 There are no equality, diversity, cohesion or integration implications in this report.

6.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

6.3.1 The projects outlined in this report contribute to targets and priorities set out in the following council policies:

- Vision For Leeds
- Children and Young Peoples Plan
- Health and Well being City Priority Plan
- Safer and Stronger Communities Plan
- Safer Leeds Plan

6.4 Resources and Value for Money

6.4.1 There are no resource implications as a result of this report.

6.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

6.5.1 All decisions taken by the Area Committee in relation to the delegated functions from Executive Board are not eligible for Call In.

6.5.2 There are no key or major decisions being made that would be eligible for Call In.

6.5.3 There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

6.6 Risk Management

6.6.1 This report provides an update on work in the Inner South and therefore no risks are identifiable. Any projects funded through Well being budget complete a section identifying risks and solutions as part of the application process.

7 Conclusions

7.1 The report provides up to date information on domestic violence incidents and responses to the Area Committee. Whilst there is a range of activity, the key developments will be around identifying and supporting families at an earlier stage to limit the damage that is done by this crime. Increasing options to work with perpetrators will be key to this approach.

8 Recommendations

8.1 The Area Committee is asked to:

- a) note the contents of the report and make comment as appropriate.

Background documents¹

There are no background papers associated with this report

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.