

**Report of: Director of Environment and Housing**

**Report to: Executive Board**

**Date: 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016**

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input 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. This report provides a summary of the work that has taken place through the Domestic Violence Breakthrough Project. It is intended that an annual report describing progress on the Breakthrough Projects will be provided. The first of these is attached as an appendix.

1.1 Work has been taken forward under four main areas;

- Changing attitudes and perceptions (individuals and communities)
- Supporting victims (adults, children and families)
- Challenging behaviours (working with perpetrators)
- Enabling effective change (workforce and organisational responses)

1.2 The last 12 months have seen significant progress been made. Key achievements include;

- Establishing the Front Door Safeguarding Hub (FDSH). The FDSH is designed to improve the safety and support of victims of domestic violence and abuse. Building on existing arrangements for the safeguarding of children, it provides a faster, more co-ordinated and consistent multi agency response to domestic violence cases.

- Launching a city wide public awareness campaign. The Get Comfortable campaign was informed through work undertaken with the Citizen's Panel and invited people to ask any questions they had about domestic violence. The campaign was the most successful domestic violence campaign that has been undertaken in the city in terms of reach and engagement.
- Developing work with perpetrators of domestic violence. This is a relatively new area of work and has included further developing the Caring Dad's Programme to address men's abusive behaviour in families and developing Integrated Offender Management approaches for high risk perpetrators of domestic violence.
- Training significant numbers of front line staff to better respond to incidents of domestic violence. Over the last year domestic violence training has been provided to over 1300 staff from a range of agencies including LCC, health and third sector staff. This has been complimented by training being delivered through the Family Valued Innovation Programme undertaken by Children's Services.

## **Recommendations**

The Board note the progress to date and request an annual report to be presented.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

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

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 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. 36% of these incidents involved repeat victims.
- 2.2 Domestic violence has been a significant factor in 26 deaths in the city since 2011. This includes 5 children and 4 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 The breakthrough projects are designed to accelerate pace and identify new ways of working on key priority issues for the city. The breakthrough projects are not owned by and single directorate or agency but are designed to improve collaboration across the council and with partners to achieve clear outcomes and benefits.
- 2.5 The city has a history of working well and innovatively with victims of domestic violence but nevertheless the numbers of incidents and especially the number of repeat incidents remains too high. 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.
- 2.6 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 a planning session for Members have also been held.
- 2.7 All of these events have generated enormous enthusiasm and momentum in the city and the ideas and suggestions have been used to develop an action plan for the programme.
- 2.8 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.

2.9 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 breakthrough project.

2.10 The key priorities identified through the OBA sessions are:

- Changing attitudes and perceptions (individuals and communities)
- Supporting victims (adults, children and families)
- Challenging behaviours (working with perpetrators)
- Enabling effective change (workforce and organisational responses).

### **3 Main issues**

3.1 During 2015/16 significant progress has been made in a number of areas. Progress against some key areas is set out below. Further details are included in Appendix1 (The Domestic Violence Breakthrough Update Report September 2016)

#### **3.2 Supporting Victims**

3.2.1 The **Front Door Safeguarding Hub** (FDSH) became operational in April 2015 and since this time over 2500 cases have been discussed.

3.2.2 The FDSH was built on existing arrangements between Children's Services West Yorkshire Police and Health for the safeguarding of children affected by domestic violence. The FDSH saw these arrangements expand to all high risk victims of domestic violence and include a wider range of partners.

3.2.3 The Front Door Safeguarding Hub brings together partners from a range of organisations, including but not limited to; police, children's social work services, health, substance misuse services, LCC housing services , domestic violence support services, probation, Adult Social Care , West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Leeds Anti- Social Behaviour Team and the Youth Offending Service.

3.2.4 A daily partnership meeting is a central element of the initiative. The focus of the meeting is to manage risk and the co-ordination of appropriate support. Duplication and multiple contacts to victims are also minimised through this approach. Clear action plans are set with for actions relating to victims, children and perpetrators.

3.2.5 The process has led to improved information sharing, reduced duplication and produced clear action plans for the cases discussed to date

3.2.6 Since April 2016 the MARAC (multi agency risk assessment conference) referrals have been integrated into the daily meetings. This has meant that cases can now be heard within a few days of referral instead of up to a month as was the case under the previously. In the first quarter of 2016/17 MARAC referrals have nearly doubled compared with the previous year with 642 referrals compared to 376.

- 3.2.7 The FDSH has also established a new process to provide better support to children affected by domestic violence. Following a successful pilot this was rolled out across the city from the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016.
- 3.2.8 The Domestic Violence School notification process informs schools and educational establishments when one of their pupils has been present at an incident of domestic violence where the police have attended. This happens the following morning; ideally before the start of the school day.
- 3.2.9 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.
- 3.2.10 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.
- 3.2.11 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.
- 3.2.12 A refreshed action plan for the FDSH is being drawn up but will include;
- Considering options to establish a seven day week model
  - Establishing a process to inform GPs of high risk domestic violence incidents
- 3.2.13 A pilot to trial monthly meetings for standard and medium (without crime) risk cases of domestic violence and abuse went live on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2016. The meetings have been attached to the existing Guidance and Support meetings. The meeting will be co- chaired by the Targeted Services Leader and a Police Inspector.

### 3.3 **Supporting Victims- Commissioning Review**

- 3.3.1 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
  - The new partnership arrangements developed to respond to incidents of domestic violence and abuse

- The growing emphasis on restorative practice and family group conferencing as a way of enabling families to change and reject violent or abusive behaviours
- The expiry of existing contracts for domestic violence and abuse services in Leeds.

3.3.2 This review has been undertaken in consultation with service users, service providers and wider stakeholders and included 2 OBA events and a stakeholder workshop and provided the opportunity to make sure that commissioned services have the capacity and flexibility to provide the necessary support and to develop a more integrated approach that is aligned with the work of the Front Door Safeguarding Hub. The new service will be in place from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.

### 3.4 **Enabling Change- Workforce Development**

- 3.4.1 A pilot project is being run 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 train the doctors to undertake the approach their surgery. This is currently being piloted in 4 surgeries across the city. NHS England is promoting this nationally as a model of good practice.
- 3.4.2 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.
- 3.4.3 A group of Domestic Violence Ambassadors has been established. This was launched through the Manager Challenge programme. 46 Ambassadors have been recruited so far and their role is to promote good practice within their teams, disseminate information and signpost colleagues and customers to places of support and help.
- 3.4.4 The council has recently refreshed its Domestic Violence Policy. To support the delivery of the policy 20 HR officers have been trained as Domestic Violence HR Champions. Their role is to advise managers and to act as contacts for any managers and staff wanting to talk through cases involving employees affected by domestic violence.
- 3.4.5 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) attaining the Domestic Violence Quality Mark. 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 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.
- A series of training programmes for midwives.

### 3.5 **Changing Attitudes and Perceptions**

- 3.5.1 A new website [www.leedsdomesticviolenceandabuse.gov.uk](http://www.leedsdomesticviolenceandabuse.gov.uk) has been established to provide a one stop shop of information for victims, perpetrators, children and practitioners in the city.
- 3.5.2 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.
- 3.5.3 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.
- 3.5.4 In collaboration with Leeds Rhinos work has been undertaken in six 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.
- 3.5.5 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.
- 3.5.6 As part of the Smart City approach work is being progressed to identify ways in which new technology can be used to help victims of domestic violence and abuse. A Smart Phone App is being developed that will allow victims to safety plan, log incidents and access help and support.

### 3.6 **Challenging Behaviours- Work with perpetrators**

- 3.6.1 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.
- 3.6.2 The Front Door Safeguarding Hub has allowed us to engage in new ways with perpetrators; offering assessments and opportunities to engage whilst in police custody.
- 3.6.3 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.

- 3.6.4 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
- 3.6.5 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.
- 3.6.6 Work is also ongoing to develop training for the wider workforce as it has been identified that staff are not confident in talking to or providing appropriate challenge to perpetrators of domestic violence.

### 3.7 **Next Steps**

- 3.7.1 Whilst much progress has been made over the last 12 months more remains to be done. The next period of time will see a particular focus on the following;
- Developing a clear outcome framework with a clear emphasis on customer satisfaction and demonstrating outcomes from the FDSH
  - Mobilising and embedding the recently commissioned domestic violence services
  - Reviewing the FDSH operational processes including the potential to move to a 7 day per week process.
  - Implementing a GP notification process at the FDSH
  - Disseminating and embedding learning from the Leeds Domestic Homicide Reviews.
  - Developing work to ensure that all members of our community are able to access appropriate help and support.
  - Launching the second phase of the Get Comfortable Campaign.
  - Developing work with new partners such as the Faith and Business Sectors.
  - Developing our responses to perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse.
  - Further developing work with the Health Economy

## 4 **Corporate considerations**

### 4.1 **Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 Two multi agency OBA sessions have been held, incorporating all council services involved in Domestic Violence and Abuse, third sector colleagues and other public sector partners. The Lead Member for the Breakthrough Project also held a Member workshop to obtain the views of elected members.



- 4.1.2 A cross council Domestic Violence Programme Board has been established to drive the programme and an elected member steering group is being established by the Lead Member, Cllr Mulherin.
- 4.1.3 A number of other multi agency OBA sessions are planned for the coming year with themes.
- 4.1.4 For each individual project within the programme different methods of engagement are employed as appropriate, such as service user focus groups or local area multi agency partnerships and ward members.
- 4.1.5 The campaign and engagement work has been informed by consultation with the citizen's panel. The campaign itself involved direct engagement with citizens of Leeds.

#### **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 4.2.1 There is a clear recognition that efforts to strengthen the city's response to domestic violence and abuse can have a positive impact on victims, families and communities. Issues related to equality and cohesion are integral to this work.
- 4.2.2 Specific work linked to the Equalities Hubs will developed as part of the next phase of the project.
- 4.2.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out as part of the Commissioning Review

#### **4.3 Council policies and best council plan**

- 4.3.1 The work detailed above links directly to the 'Be safe, feel safe', and enjoy healthy, happy, active lives' Best Council Plan outcomes, while 'Tackling Domestic Violence and Abuse' is one of eight key Breakthrough projects delivering our Best Council Plan priorities for 2016/17, including those of 'keeping people safe from harm' and supporting children to have the best start in life'. The number of domestic violence and abuse incidents with repeat victims is listed explicitly as a key Performance indicator in the 2016-17 BCP update'.
- 4.3.2 Cabinet have identified Domestic Violence and Abuse as one of eight key Breakthrough projects and the work detailed above links directly the Best Council Objective 'Supporting Communities and Tackling Poverty' where the establishment of the Front Door Safeguarding Hub is listed explicitly as a key Performance indicator.

#### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

- 4.4.1 The Breakthrough projects by definition are intended to make best use of existing resources by working innovatively as a team for Leeds, a number of the projects listed were achieved using the different application of the existing resources of the council and its partners.

4.4.2 Three new LCC posts have been created to support the delivery of the Front Door Safeguarding Hub. These posts have been funded this financial year from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Community Safety Fund.

4.4.3 As part of the review of commissioned services value for money exercises are applied at each stage and an approved best value approach is intended to be taken towards procurement, whereby the provider offering the most comprehensive service at the best value, will be offered the tender.

4.4.4 Resources to work with perpetrators of domestic violence are limited. Work to explore need and demand will be undertaken as a priority.

#### 4.5 **Legal Implications, access to information and call In**

4.5.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with the issues identified in this report. The report is subject to call in.

#### 4.6 **Risk management**

4.6.1 An individual risk assessment for each project within the programme has been carried out and will be available on the council's project management system.

### 5 **Conclusions**

5.1 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.

5.2 Measuring the impact of domestic violence work is challenging. Over the next quarter an outcome framework will be compiled that will focus on customer satisfaction and the outcomes achieved by the FDSH.

### 6 **Recommendations**

6.1 That the Board note the progress to date and request an annual report to be presented.

### 7 **Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 **None.**

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.