

Report of: Director of Communities and Environment

Report to: Executive Board

Date: 13th December 2017

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

- 1.0 This report provides a summary of the work that has taken place through the Domestic Violence Breakthrough Project. The first Domestic Violence Breakthrough Project Annual Report was provided to Executive Board in September 2016. The second Annual Report is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.1 The Domestic Violence Breakthrough project is developing work in 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 has seen significant “breakthroughs” including;

Identifying and supporting more victims.

- Through the Front Door Safeguarding Hub (FDSH) arrangements an additional **718 (58%)** of high risk domestic violence victims have been identified and supported in the first 2 quarters of 17/18 compared to the same time period last year.

- Reporting of DV to the police has increased and more people have self-reported DV incidents that they have experienced.
- More agencies are identifying high risk victims and referring cases to the FDSH.

Enabling Effective Change

- Improved staff confidence in responding to domestic violence and abuse through training and the quality mark
- Engaging private sector businesses
- Developing innovative, nationally recognised, practice in GPs surgeries to identify and offer support to victims
- Developing locality based earlier interventions

1.3 Key issues that the breakthrough project will work to make a step change in for the next year include;

- Developing our responses to repeat and complex cases
- Developing further work with the Leeds Equality hubs to improve access to services for all people and communities in Leeds
- Increase options for perpetrators to access help
- Developing work on social isolation as a key barrier to tackling domestic violence

Recommendations

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

That the Board consider and agree action to address the challenges outlined in the report and identify opportunities for further work to be developed.

That the Board notes that the Director of Communities & Environment is responsible for the Domestic Violence & Abuse Breakthrough Project.

1.0 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 and outlines some ongoing challenges.

2.0 Background information

- 2.1 Most people's lives have been touched by domestic violence and abuse in some way and many of us know someone who has been affected by it. This issue cuts across all ethnic groups, all ages and all social backgrounds.
- 2.2 The human and financial impact of domestic violence and abuse to adults, children, families and our communities is considerable. In addition to the significant harm and disruption it causes to individual lives, the cost to public services and economic output are also widely recognised.
- 2.3 The scale of the issue in the city is significant with over **19,591** incidents of domestic violence reported to West Yorkshire Police in the 12 months up to September 2017, a **9.8%** increase on the previous year. ¹ **44.5%** of those incidents included a repeat victim
- 2.4 Domestic violence also has a significant impact on children and young people. Children were present in 30.6% of the incidents reported to the police and approximately 26% of referrals to Children's Social Work Service every month have domestic violence as the primary reason for referral. DV was a factor in 65% of babies under age of one entering care (2017)
- 2.5 Domestic violence has been a significant factor in **30** deaths in the city since **2011**. 14 Domestic Violence Homicide Reviews have been undertaken and of these: **12** victims were women; **5** children were killed alongside their mother; **10** victims were aged 50 years plus (of these, 4 were 60 plus); **3** victims were from BME backgrounds; and there were **3** suicides.
- 2.6 The Domestic Violence Breakthrough Project was established to make a step change in the way we tackle domestic violence and abuse. The scale, impact and complexity of domestic violence means that no one agency or sector can address the issue in isolation.

¹ The increase mirrors a national trend and the Office of National Statistics state that it is important to note that the increase is likely to be driven by improvements in crime recording by the police. As well as general improvements, the police may have improved their identification of which offences are domestic abuse-related and more victims may be coming forward to report these crimes. The latest data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) showed that there was no change in the prevalence of domestic abuse among adults aged 16 to 59 between the year ending March 2016 (6.1%) and the year ending March 2017 (5.9%). The apparent decrease was not statistically significant.

Since the year ending March 2005, the CSEW has included a self-completion questionnaire module on intimate violence, for persons aged 16 to 59 years only⁴, which provides a measure of the proportion of people who have been victims of domestic abuse in this age group over time. The most recent data available (year ending March 2017) showed the proportion of all adults aged 16 to 59 years who had been victims of domestic abuse in the last year (including attempted offences) has shown no change from the previous year (the apparent decrease to 5.9% from 6.1% was not statistically significant).

2.7 The Breakthrough projects' approach of improving collaboration across the council and with partners to achieve clear outcomes and benefits provides an ideal framework to take forward work to tackle this significant issue.

2.8 Following a wide ranging Scrutiny Inquiry, consultations and Outcome Based Accountability Sessions it was agreed to take work forward in 4 key 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 response)**

3.0 Main issues

3.1 During 2016/17 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, December 2017)

3.2 Supporting Victims: Front Door Safeguarding Hub

3.2.1 The Front Door Safeguarding Hub became operational in 2015 and involves over 15 agencies coming together on a daily basis to share information and co-ordinate and plan responses to high risk cases of domestic violence. 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 actions relating to victims, children and perpetrators.

3.2.2 Since the FDSH was established in April 2015, we have seen an **increase** in cases coming to the daily domestic violence meeting in the form of increased referrals from all agencies, the number of police incidents and better identification of high risk situations. For the first 2 quarters of 17/18 this has equated to **718** individuals, a **58%** increase on the same time period in the previous year.

3.2.3 This increase is extremely positive in that it means more victims can be supported through the arrangements, however it is also causing strain on capacity and resources.

3.2.4 A review is being undertaken to identify resources required and opportunities to manage demand. For example, it has been identified that the health input might be more effectively managed by a system wide collaborative response working across the health economy and with access to all key health information systems.

3.2.5 Earlier intervention may also provide an opportunity to prevent situations escalating. Models of work for this are being explored.

- 3.2.6 As part of the FDSH arrangements, processes to notify schools and GPs of domestic violence incidents have been introduced.
- 3.2.7 Schools now receive information at the beginning of the school day if one of their pupils has been present at an incident of domestic violence that police have attended. From April 2016 to March 2017, **4531** notifications have been made to schools.
- 3.2.8 CCG staff at the front door notify GPs of concerns for all victims identified at the daily domestic violence meetings. Since this was established, over **3000** notifications to GPs have been made and there has also been an increase in referrals to the daily meeting from GPs.
- 3.2.9 An audit of these notifications has enabled the CCG Safeguarding Team to identify the GP Practices with high incidence of patients subject to or at risk of Domestic Violence and Abuse incidents. The CCG Safeguarding Team are working with Safer Leeds to promote services to these areas and plan to offer bespoke training for each GP practice.

3.3 Supporting Victims: Front Door: Health Responses

- 3.3.1 **Developing Routine Enquiry in GP Practices.** In Leeds, routine enquiry has been undertaken in Midwifery and Health Visiting for a number of years. A pilot to test this in GP settings was undertaken in Garforth. GPs reported feeling far more confident about asking questions about domestic violence and about **15%** of the female patient population disclosed they had been or were currently experiencing domestic violence. This enabled the GP to provide appropriate care.
- 3.3.2 Following the pilot, West Yorkshire Police data showed that Garforth had the highest rate of change for self-reporting of domestic violence incidents with a **47%** increase; indicating a possible link between being asked a question in a health setting increasing confidence to report to the police.
- 3.3.3 Following the success of the pilot, routine enquiry about domestic violence is now being rolled out to GP practices in Leeds. To date 16 practices are now undertaking Routine Enquiry and discussions underway with a further 18. Data from the FDSH notifications is being used to prioritise practices for roll out.
- 3.3.4 This work has been recognised as national good practice with the pilot at Moorfield Practice shortlisted for a British Medical Journal (BMJ) award in the primary care category. Despite not winning the award the judging panel commented that the work was inspirational.
- 3.3.5 NHS England have also recognised the work, inviting staff from Safer Leeds and the GP practice to input into a delegation for health colleagues from Georgia and are also hosting a conference (planned for April 2018) to rolling the Leeds Model out across the North of England.

3.4 Supporting Victims; Commissioned Services

- 3.4.1 Following a review of domestic violence and abuse services a new contract for domestic violence services was awarded in April 2017 to Leeds Domestic Violence Services (LDVS). LDVS are a consortium comprising Leeds Women's Aid Incorporating HALT, Behind Closed Doors and Women's Health Matters.

The contract is for both refuge provision and advice and support services and delivers;

- 24/7 helpline to victims and professionals
- Emergency short stay accommodation for those who need urgent refuge accommodation;
- Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) for clients at high risk, safety planning, advice on legal remedies and support with navigating criminal and civil justice systems;
- drop-ins for people who prefer informal support;
- community outreach and group work;
- Resettlement service to support those moving on from emergency accommodation and clients who require a planned move to ensure their safety.

The new specification has been designed to take account of issues such as;

- learning from the Domestic Homicide Reviews
- supporting the FDSH arrangements
- better reach to isolated and vulnerable communities through locality based drop ins and group work
- ensuring a “think family” approach

Since the new contract has been in place more people have been supported through drop-ins (**255**) and casework (**1134**) than in the same period last year, (125 and 895).

3.5 Enabling Change- Workforce Development

- 3.5.1 Ensuring that front line staff have a good understanding of the issues of Domestic Violence and Abuse and are confident to respond is a key aim of the Domestic Violence Breakthrough Project. This is achieved through either stand-alone training or briefings or through the Domestic Violence Quality Mark.
- 3.5.2 The Leeds Domestic Violence Quality Mark was designed to equip staff with the skills to deliver sensitive responses to those disclosing domestic violence and seeking help. It also promotes appropriate and effective response from the whole organisation. Organisations undertaking the Quality Mark receive bespoke training, help with developing policies and guidelines and are supported to engage effectively with Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARA)C processes and other initiatives.
- 3.5.3 Over 20 agencies have attained the Quality Mark in the last 12 months including Keepmoat, Mears Leeds, Forward Leeds, 2gether RESteam, LCC Adults and Health (ASC Operations) and a number of 3rd sector organisations.

- 3.5.4 All 58 Children's Centres have also attained the Domestic Violence Quality Mark and an evaluation showed a positive impact on children centre staff in relation to their understanding of domestic violence issues and how to assess risk and respond to those families who are affected. Centres report that it has helped build successful partnerships with a range of agencies and, most importantly, raised the profile of domestic violence in their centre, enabling families to seek the support they need.
- 3.5.5 Organisations who have undertaken the Quality Mark tell us that they feel much better equipped to respond to both service users and their employees who are affected by domestic violence and abuse.
- 3.5.6 Safer Leeds has delivered 90 training sessions to 1554 practitioners during the last 12 months. This has included training for A&E staff, Midwives, GPs, Medical Students, Mental Health Practitioners, Youth Offending Service, Housing Leeds and drug and alcohol workers.
- 3.5.7 The content of the courses is kept up to date with emerging learning from the Domestic Homicide Reviews.
- 3.5.8 Evaluation of the courses shows that 93% of participants say that the training helped them to improve their practice to a great extent.
- 3.5.9 As part of its wider innovation programme, Children and Families Directorate, are establishing Restorative Early Support (RES) Teams to work flexibly with existing services to improve the offer of help to families with high needs. The first RES Team is now up and running in the East area of the city. A specialist domestic violence worker from Families First is seconded to support the team and partners to improve outcomes for families where domestic violence is present. A huge part of this role is to skill up and support the workforce which includes supporting case discussions, signposting, completion of risk assessments and referrals to MARAC. The team have also recently gained the Level 1 QM, and are working on the Level 2
- 3.5.10 A network of Domestic Violence Ambassadors also plays a key role in supporting their colleagues to develop effective responses. There are now over 60 active Ambassadors from a range of Statutory, 3rd Sector and Private Sector organisations in the city who are trained to be points of contact within their organisations; encouraging conversations, disseminating information and signposting people to support and help.
- 3.5.11 The DV Ambassadors also provide support around campaigns such as the White Ribbon and 16 days of action and initiatives such as the "City Centre Sweep" in May 2017, where 20 ambassadors visited over 120 restaurants, clubs and bars in the City Centre to disseminate DV posters, help cards and other materials and discuss ways they could help tackle domestic violence.

3.6 Changing Attitudes and Perceptions

- 3.6.1 The website www.leedsdomesticviolenceandabuse.gov.uk was established to provide a one stop shop of information for victims, perpetrators, children and practitioners in the city.
- 3.6.2 Data suggests that the website is well used with nearly 24,000 hits over the last 12 months. The data also suggests that the site is well used by professionals and

usage peaks during particular campaigns or promotion. Work is being taken forward to develop the website to make it accessible to more people and ensure it is well-used all year round. Work is also ongoing to increase and improve social media content.

- 3.6.3 Over the last year we have also been working with a wide range of internal, local and regional key partners and stakeholders to ensure marketing and communications are joined up and co-ordinated so that messages are timely and clear, and any activity is widely supported and complimentary of other work happening in the city and beyond.
- 3.6.4 As part of this we have been improving our links with other local authorities in the region and other regional partners such as WYP and PCC, to work in partnership where possible. This will increase resource, offer better value for money, and achieve higher impact. Over this last year, high profile domestic violence campaigns have been run across West Yorkshire, led by WYP but supported by the 5 local authorities and the Police and Crime Commissioner; these have focussed on encouraging reporting and coercive control.
- 3.6.5 Last November also saw two successful campaigns run across the city, the Leeds 16 Days of Action and the White Ribbon Campaign. Our Leeds 16 Days of Action in 2016 included radio interviews on Fever FM, a libraries campaign to promote books on domestic violence, social media newsfeeds and activities in schools promoting respectful relationships.
- 3.6.7 The White Ribbon campaign asked men in the city to take a pledge to never commit, condone or remain silent about men's violence towards women. Over 1500 men took the pledge and the twitter reach on the day was 110,000 – trending 4th nationally on twitter.
- 3.6.8 The campaigns this year will focus on the theme of coercive control and planned events include; domestic violence blogs; a poster campaign utilising the big screen in Millennium Square, GP's surgeries and library screens and a 'Tell Someone' Call to action on social media. a White Ribbon Team bus performing 'flash-mob' style short sketches around the theme of coercive control and selfie boards' for men and boys to take White Ribbon pledges. The Leeds White Ribbon campaign will be supported by Leeds United Football Club.
- 3.6.9 As last year, the Domestic Violence Ambassadors will play a vital role in organising and delivering the campaign activities.
- 3.6.10 A key aim of the breakthrough project over the last year has been to look at ways to identify unmet need, gaps in provision and improve access for some of our most vulnerable and disadvantage communities.
- 3.6.11 To achieve this a number of OBA sessions have been held in partnership with Equality Hubs and key organisations. These have included work with the LGBT+ community hub, the Migrant Community Hub, the Leeds Health Economy and an OBA focussed on Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage.
- 3.6.12 These sessions have provided valuable insight and identified a number of actions to be taken forward. This approach will be further developed as a priority for the Breakthrough Project over the coming year.

3.7 Challenging Behaviours- Work with perpetrators

3.7.1 Whilst service to victims are essential, there is increasing recognition of the need to improve service responses to perpetrators which have not developed at the same pace and are fragmented.

3.7.2 Work is ongoing to better understand the need and demand in the city and a number of gaps have been identified including;

- A gap in provision for offenders coming to the end of community and custodial sentences with little support for offenders beyond statutory supervision.
- Limited interventions for female perpetrators offenders from the LGBT+ community
- Little research or data around the needs of perpetrators who experience discrimination as outlined in the characteristics within the Equality Act 2010 such as women, BME groups, and LGBT communities and disabled perpetrators and those whose first language is not English.

3.7.3 Some of these gaps and learning were also identified in the Joint Targeted Area Inspection Report: Multi -Agency response to children living with domestic abuse (September 2017). The key learning in relation to this inspection were; as follows

- The role of coercive control in the behaviour of perpetrators isn't fully appreciated or understood by practitioners working with families
- Inappropriate use of written agreements with victims re protecting children from perpetrators and non-engagement of abusive fathers;
- Gaps in services to perpetrators, particularly for those who've not received a criminal conviction
- Lack of early intervention in DV means that crisis intervention happens when perpetrators are least likely to engage.

3.7.4 Whilst gaps remain some innovative work has been developed to better work with and engage with perpetrators of domestic violence. This includes programmes such as Choices (a West Yorkshire early intervention programme funded by the PCC), Caring Dads and PACT (Parents and Children Together) which focusses on child to parent violence.

3.7.5 Caring Dads is a group work programme, based in the Children and Families Directorate, and works with men who have behaved abusively towards their children and partners. Caring Dads are also developing innovative responses to better engage BME men within work to address domestic violence and abuse.

3.7.6 We have also begun to increase the capacity among a broad range of services to respond to perpetrators. Whilst specialist and specific work with perpetrators is important, generic services need to be better equipped to respond to perpetrators as part of their offer. Examples of this include;

- The Quality Mark includes a standard around work with perpetrators to prompt agencies to identify a champion for this area and to consider what the organisation needs to do. Training and support is provided to promote effective engagement with perpetrators, risk and needs assessments, safety planning and information sharing.
- The development of Family Group Conferencing, Family Valued, Think Family and Fathers Inclusive Practice work has included a focus on how to engage men including those men perpetrating domestic violence.

3.8 Next Steps

3.8.1 Whilst much progress has been made over the last 12 months more remains to be done. A number of challenges have been identified through the Breakthrough Project and through learning from the Domestic Homicide Reviews that have been undertaken in the city. These will form part of the work programme for the domestic violence programme board over the next year. The key issues include:

- **The capacity to manage volume:** Resources at the FDSH are stretched. A review is being undertaken to identify resources required and opportunities to manage demand. Earlier intervention may also provide an opportunity to prevent situations escalating. Models of work for this are being explored.
- **Lack of understanding;** Not understanding stalking and coercive control means that incidents are often seen as isolated occurrences rather than as a pattern of abuse
- **Social isolation:** Victims who are socially isolated can be more vulnerable and find it more difficult to seek and receive support
- **Engaging with and understanding people with complex needs:** A number of reviews involved victims (and perpetrators) with complex needs such as historic abuse, drug, alcohol and mental health issues. These issues can make it difficult for people to make and maintain contact with health agencies, drug and alcohol services and mental health services and can be misinterpreted as the victim choosing not to engage
- **Gaps:** There is a recognised gap in responses for perpetrators of violence with little available outside of Criminal Justice System.

4.0 Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 A number of 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 has also held a Member workshop to obtain the views and support of elected members. A further session for Members is planned for November 2017.

4.1.2 Consultation has also been undertaken at various points with victims of domestic violence.

- 4.1.3 A multi- agency Domestic Violence Programme Board is in place and responsible for driving forward the programme; this is chaired by the Lead Member, Cllr Mulherin.
- 4.1.4 In September 2017 Safer Leeds Executive, the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board and the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board came together at a joint meeting to identify joint issues and priorities. Domestic Violence and Abuse was identified as a key issue for all three boards in the context of a broader theme of violence in the home. Programmes of work will be developed from this, aligned to the work of the DV Breakthrough project.
- 4.1.5 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.
- 4.1.6 The campaign and public engagement work is informed by consultation and insight work.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 Issues related to equality and cohesion are integral to this work.
- 4.2.2 Specific work linked to the Equalities Hubs is being taken forward and will inform the work that is being taken forward.
- 4.2.3 A number of the Domestic Homicide Reviews have provided rich information of issues relating to equality and disadvantage.

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 happy, healthy, active lives' Best Council Plan outcomes. 'Tackling domestic violence and abuse' is one of eight key breakthrough projects identified by lead members helping deliver our Best Council Plan priorities for 2017/18 including Good growth, Health and wellbeing, Resilient communities and Child-friendly city. One of the Best Council Plan 2017/18 key performance indicators is 'Increased self-reporting of domestic violence and abuse incidents'.

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 The Breakthrough Project has also brought new investment in to the city; with Leeds leading a successful bid on behalf of the West Yorkshire Authorities to the Department of Communities and Local Government. £4633,000 was awarded for work to provide;
- Additional secure accommodation for up to 30 families over the year across West Yorkshire alongside enhanced security measures in a further 50 properties.
 - Additional counselling provision for victims in refuge accommodation

- Establishing a West Yorkshire Domestic Violence Quality Mark
- Providing Specialist secondments from mental health, substance misuse and BME specific services to provide increase skills, knowledge and practice within DV services across the region
- Training staff across West Yorkshire (two per area) to be able to give advice on immigration related issues and domestic violence.

4.4.3 Leeds were also a partner in a successful WY bid, led by the PCC to the Home Office Violence against Women and Girls Fund. £600,000 was awarded over 2 year. This will enable the testing of new interventions including developing a new team to increase and develop the use of Domestic Violence Protection Orders. This team will be based within Safer Leeds.

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.

4.6.2 The key risk identified relates to the capacity and resourcing for the FDSH. A review is being undertaken to identify opportunities to better manage demand and identify resources required across the partnership. This will report to the Domestic Violence Breakthrough Project Programme Board.

5.0 Conclusions

5.1 The city has a history of working well and innovatively with victims of domestic violence but nevertheless scale and impact of domestic violence and abuse remains significant. The breakthrough project provides an opportunity to build on the work that has taken place in the city on this issue over a number of years and to identify ways to do things differently for lasting change.

5.2 This last year has seen significant progress made in creating new approaches to tackling Domestic Violence and Abuse. As described above much has been progressed including:

- Further developing the FDSH including establishing a process for DV notification to GPs. Through the FDSH arrangements an additional 718 high risk DV victims have been identified and supported in the since April 2017 compared to last year.
- Reporting of DV has increased and more people have self-reported DV incidents that they have experienced.
- Developing innovative practice in GPs surgeries.
- Improved staff confidence in responding to domestic violence and abuse

- 5.3 However more work remains to be done. Learning from the Domestic Homicide Reviews and ongoing engagement and consultation provide clear information on gaps and challenges which the DV Breakthrough Project Programme Board will work on over the coming year.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 That the Board note the progress to date and request an annual report to be presented.
- 6.2 That the Board consider and agree action to address the challenges outlined in the report and identify opportunities for further work to be developed.
- 6.3 That the Board notes that the Director of Communities & Environment is responsible for the Domestic Violence & Abuse Breakthrough Project.

7.0 Background documents²

None

² 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.