

**Open Report on behalf of Pete Moore,
Executive Director of Finance and Public Protection**

Report to:	Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date:	23 April 2019
Subject:	Update on the Response to Domestic Abuse in Lincolnshire

Summary:

This report provides the Committee with an overview and update of the work that is being undertaken in relation to Domestic Abuse (DA) within Lincolnshire and advises on future developments that are likely to have an impact for the county's response to domestic abuse.

Actions Required:

Members of the Committee are invited to consider and comment on the contents of this report, and the Councils role in driving forward the domestic abuse agenda in Lincolnshire.

1. Key areas of activity:

Tackling DA and improving the outcomes for those exposed to DA is a core priority for the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership, and Lincolnshire County Council is a key agency in providing both funding and resources to support work in this field; in terms of strategic planning and oversight, commissioning, coordination and administration. Below is a summary of the key areas of activity taking place in respect of DA:

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) review:

MARAC meetings bring together partners to discuss how best to support victims at high risk of serious harm or homicide. The DA Co-ordinator is currently undertaking a full review of how the MARAC operates within Lincolnshire, this review includes observations of the meetings; focus groups with Chairs; agency representatives, practitioners and families where possible; analysis of performance data; desk top audit of a selection of cases including examining referrals, actions and outcomes and benchmarking with other authorities. A Chairs and representatives event will take place in June and will form part of the

dissemination of findings from the review, as well as looking at development and training needs. In addition a multi-agency task and finish group is exploring the coordination of Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment (DASH) risk checklists, for those victims who have a standard to medium risk outcome.

Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR's):

A review of the DHR process has been undertaken by the DA Coordinator and a streamlined process is currently being implemented with appropriate operational tools and clear multi-agency process maps. In addition progress is being made to sign off a number of DHR's for publication and chase outstanding actions.

The DA Multi Agency Training:

The 1 day training commissioned by LCC Community Safety has been reviewed to include a section about identifying and engaging with perpetrators. In addition 4 (per year) new ½ day multi agency sessions have been commissioned from October 2019 that will focus on coercive and controlling behaviour and stalking or harassment.

Community-based Perpetrator Programme:

The 'Make a Change' pilot programme commissioned by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner through the Police Transformation Fund had a soft launch on 1st March 2019. The agreed pilot area is Lincoln however the provider will take referrals and enquires from across the County. This is the final year of the current funding stream and a vigorous evaluation will form part of the pilot project to ensure the outcomes are clear and work can be undertaken to secure funding to deliver the programme beyond the pilot period.

The programme has three parts;

1. A three stage perpetrator programme including a 10 week non-disclosure stage, 16 week full programme and a 6 week parenting element, as well as a victim support element. (Expert Support Services)
2. Practitioner training package (Trusted Professional)
3. Community engagement (Community Response)

RESPECT and Women's Aid (WAFE) are the lead partners with local delivery partners the Jenkins Centre who are delivering the perpetrator engagement element and SoLDAS (South Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Services) who are working with the victims.

Specialist DA Courts (SDAC):

A partnership operational group led by the Courts and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is in place to support the introduction of a Specialist Domestic Abuse Court (SDAC) in Lincolnshire. The Court will take place on a Wednesday commencing on 17th April 2019 with a number of key elements in place, however the operational group will work towards achieving the specialist SDAC status by implementing the best practice framework. This will be an important achievement for Lincolnshire, meaning victims of DA are better supported through the court process and should see an improvement of perpetrator conviction rates (supported by evidence from other areas).

Child to Parent/Carer Abuse:

Children's Services have commissioned a consultant to research and develop a programme/initiative to work with children and adolescents that display abusive behaviours towards their parents/carers. The consultant is currently developing the multi-agency operational tools and resources for the initiative as well as an implementation plan, including a comprehensive engagement strategy. This is being presented to the DA Core Priority Group (CPG) in April 2019.

Employer Awareness/Support Scheme

The DA Project Officer is working with SOLDAS in supporting large local employers to develop their Human Resources policies and procedures in relation to DA, as well as raising awareness of how employers can support both victims and perpetrators. To date the project has engaged with Lincolnshire Co-op, Bakkavor, Boston College, Moy Park and North Sea Camp Prison.

Draft DA Bill:

The [Draft DA Bill](#) was published in January 2019 with the intention of tackling DA by:

- Introducing the first ever statutory government definition of DA to specifically include economic abuse and controlling and manipulative non-physical abuse. This will enable everyone, including victims themselves, to understand what constitutes abuse and will encourage more victims to come forward.
- Establishing a Domestic Abuse Commissioner to drive the response to domestic abuse issues.
- Introducing new Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders to further protect victims and place restrictions on the actions of offenders.
- Prohibit the cross-examination of victims by their abusers in the family courts.

- Provide automatic eligibility for special measures to support more victims to give evidence in the criminal courts.

This will be included on the next DA CPG agenda for discussion to examine the implications for Lincolnshire, and explore the co-ordination of partnership communications with the new DA Commissioner.

2. Next steps/further developments

The DA Charter is being reviewed and developed ensuring it covers the key strategic and operational areas that agencies should have in place in response to DA, such as strategic leadership commitment, policies and procedures, training resources and expectations etc. and specifically to include explicit reference to what agencies are doing in relation to perpetrator engagement and practitioner understanding and knowledge of working with perpetrators, stalking or harassment, coercive and controlling behaviour and child to parent/carer abuse. At the DA CPG in January 2019 the partnership agreed to a full review and that all agencies would undertake a health check/audit in 2019 using the new and revised charter.

A multi-agency task and finish group has been set up to develop a DA strategy for Lincolnshire, bringing in line the DA CPG delivery plan priorities, national initiatives and guidance, the DA Bill, local/national statistics/trends and ambitions for Lincolnshire. This will include a section specifically in relation to DA perpetrators with the overall aim and ambitions for Lincolnshire in relation to a community based perpetrator programme but also the wider response to all DA perpetrators in Lincolnshire.

Work in partnership with the National Probation Service (NPS), Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) in Lincolnshire and Jenkins Centre to explore a sustainable multi agency training package in relation to perpetrators.

A partnership communications programme is being developed to raise awareness of key messages in relation to DA with key audiences, including practitioners, victims, perpetrators, children and young people, family and friends and communities. The first campaign is in partnership and being led by LPFT focusing on raising awareness of coercive and controlling behaviour. In addition a series of DA leaflets raising awareness of DA in general and MARAC/IDVA are being developed and will be accessible to all partners.

The partnership are working to develop provision for the 0-5 year old sector, working with nurseries, child minders and children's centres to develop an educational package that helps 0-5's contextualise what a healthy relationship

and family is, as well as up-skilling and raising awareness of DA and the key messages with practitioners in this sector.

The DA Coordinator will work with RESPECT, WAFE, the Jenkins Centre and the DA CPG to develop a sustainable and effective community based perpetrator programme for Lincolnshire based on the evaluation and outcomes of the Make a Change pilot.

3. Domestic Abuse Commissioned Services

The contract to deliver the specialist DA services in Lincolnshire was awarded by Lincolnshire County Council to a single provider, now called EDAN Lincs (Ending Domestic Abuse Now in Lincolnshire) and the new service commenced on 1st August 2018. One service provider for the county means residents can now access the same support provision from the same provider, wherever they reside in Lincolnshire.

The following is a brief summary of the support services offered by EDAN Lincs across the county:

Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) Service:

The IDVA Service is commissioned to support victims (men, women and young people aged 16 and over) who reside within the geographical boundaries of Lincolnshire, and who have been assessed as at 'high risk' of serious harm or death, and have been referred to a Lincolnshire Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). An IDVA provides a confidential information, advocacy and advice service; assisting individuals and their families to access criminal and civil justice remedies, housing, counselling, advice, health and other support services.

Hospital-based IDVA:

This new service was established at Lincoln County Hospital in January of this year, with funding secured to mirror the service at Boston Pilgrim Hospital from April 2019 onwards.

The aims of the service are to reduce the immediate risk of harm and homicide, and improve the physical and mental health outcomes of those affected by DA and receiving treatment. The hospital-based IDVA provides immediate support and advice to victims to improve their safety and advocacy, as well as link them and their families to longer-term specialist community-based support services.

Although still early days, the IDVA at Lincoln County Hospital has already engaged with over 20 individuals (patients and staff) experiencing domestic abuse. The IDVA has also undertaken a number of other activities, from

consultations and briefings/ training sessions, to enhance the ability of front line staff to recognise and respond to DA and raise awareness of DA support services.

Outreach Domestic Abuse Support Service - Support for Adults (Women and Men):

All referrals are triaged on access into the service to ensure clients are prioritised and managed in an appropriate and timely manner. The type of support offered will vary and will be determined by the level of risk and need identified. A comprehensive service user led safety & support plan is formulated, bespoke to the service user and their family. The nature of the support available for adults ranges from telephone support and signposting to online resources, to evidenced-based group and intensive 1:1 therapeutic interventions specifically targeting domestic abuse.

Outreach Domestic Abuse Support Service – Support for Children/ Families:

Once adults engage in the Outreach Service, families will have the opportunity to access the Family Focus programme where it is safe and appropriate to do so. The Family Focus programme consists of family group sessions with the non-abusive parent/caregiver and their child/ren together. The purpose of the support is to help the family to stay safe, assist in the rebuilding of relationships which may have been damaged or undermined by the impact of domestic abuse, and ultimately empower the non-abusive parent to meet the needs of their child/ren.

Targeted Children's Support Service:

The new service for children and young people is available to those aged 5 to 16 years, whose non abusive parent is already accessing Outreach support, as well as Looked After Children, those under a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) and adopted children. Young people who have been identified as having SEND and/or are a care leaver, can access the service up to the age of 25. The support is suitable for those assessed as having higher levels of need or experiencing the more serious effects of domestic abuse. Those children will be provided specialist 1:1 therapeutic support and intervention that focus on the needs of the child, taking into account factors such as age and vulnerability.

The new arrangements went live on the 1st August 2018, and by the end of that year over 300 children had actively engaged in the service; either through direct therapeutic work or as part of Family Focus support sessions. A high level of work is already being undertaken with children, and EDAN Lincs continues to work closely with the Corporate Commissioning Team, the Community Safety Team and Children's Services to further develop this new element of service.

Domestic Abuse related funding opportunities

A collaborative bid had been made to the 'Children Affected by Domestic (CADA)Fund' in the Autumn of 2018 in order to extend the prevention and early intervention offer to schools (primary, secondary, special schools, pupil referral units and colleges as well as nurseries and child minders) across Lincolnshire, as well as increase the work with local employers and communities. Unfortunately this bid was unsuccessful, but the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator continues to work closely with the providers of DA services in Lincolnshire to explore other funding opportunities, including the Tampon Tax fund.

4. Summary

It is hoped that the information in this report demonstrates to the Committee the amount of work being undertaken in relation to DA, and the pivotal role that Lincolnshire County Council has in delivering this work. These key areas of work, as well as the commissioned DA services, complement each other and create a holistic response to victims, perpetrators and children affected by Domestic Abuse.

5. Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

Not Applicable

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

Not Applicable

8. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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