

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Safer City Partnership Committee	3 February 2017
<b>Subject:</b> Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Forum Quarterly Report	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Chris Pelham Assistant Director (People) Department of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>

### Summary

This report details the quarterly update of the activities of the Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Forum in delivering its two-year Strategic Action Plan.

In this report, members are asked to note updates related to:

- The City VAWG Strategy (in addition to the more detailed paper for decision by Committee) being completed and setting the priorities for the next City Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategic Action Plan, to be finalised in March 2017.
- Vulnerable Victim Advocate re-commissioning in-line with the needs of victims in the City and supporting the strategic aims of the Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Forum.
- Training and making sure a formal process exists for a consistent and clear response for repair staff in the City Housing Department, in line with the existing strategic plan and lessons learned from the Case Review of a Serious Incident, which concluded in August 2016.
- Safeguarding Children from the Experience of Domestic Abuse Policy, detailing how the City will support children and young people witnessing and experiencing domestic abuse.
- Update on the Domestic Abuse Profile for the City including work that will be taking place in the early part of 2017 to enable a holistic collection of data.
- MARAC update, noting how the City continues to strengthen its response to high risk cases of domestic abuse.
- Directory of Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Services to help professionals and members of the public to access services in the City, pan-London and nationally.
- City workers domestic abuse awareness training pilot with Lloyds Banking Group, highlighting how participants evaluated the training.

- Training on engaging with perpetrators of domestic abuse, to strengthen access to programmes that facilitate understanding in perpetrators of the harmful impacts of their abusive and controlling behaviour.

## **Main Report**

### **Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy**

1. The City of London Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy has been reviewed by the Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Forum with no further comments.
2. Produced in consultation with local partners it sets out the key priorities for the City in responding to VAWG:
  - Access to support – ensuring the safety and protection of those who need it is key. Awareness of how to engage with services which are accessible and people know what they will get when they do.
  - Raising awareness of ending VAWG – communications plans to raise awareness of prevention and support, with emphasis on residents, children and young people, City workers and local service providers.
  - Ending harmful practice – training and use of risk assessments to talk with services users and professionals about harmful practice.
  - Holding perpetrators to account – making sure perpetrators understand the impacts of their harmful behaviour and helping professionals to engage with perpetrators and assisting with the uptake of specialist support programmes.
  - Responding to trafficking, prostitution and sexual exploitation – developing a holistic programme for supporting those involved and making sure those who perpetrate exploitation are brought to justice. Strengthening partnerships with services already working in the City.
  - Addressing harmful attitudes and behaviour at an early age – healthy relationship work in schools and youth services will address issues of consent, coercion, gender awareness and raise awareness of specialist support services.
  - Understanding and responding to the health impact of VAWG – a focus on City health partners to raise awareness of the long term health consequences of abuse and harmful practice.

- Improving women's safety on public transport – City will continue to operate the pan-London Safer Travel at Night (STAN) campaign and strengthen good practice between British Transport Police, City of London Police and the Corporation to keep women safe from harassment and harm when travelling.
  - Learning from Domestic Violence Homicide Reviews and specialist service providers – the City will learn from tragic cases of domestic violence homicide and respond by improving services accordingly. A formal review will be conducted independently and the learning shared publicly.
3. Once this strategy has been signed off by the Safer City Partnership Committee, it will direct the next two-year strategic action plan (2017-19) for the Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Forum.
  4. The action plan is currently being drafted and will go to consultation with local partners in February to be finalised at the March 2017 Forum meeting.
  5. The action plan will involve key activities focusing on strengthening leadership, access to support, training, operational practice, community engagement, children and young people and criminal intelligence.

### **Vulnerable Victim Advocate**

6. The Domestic Abuse Coordinator is working with the Head of the Public Protection Unit in City of London Police and Victim Support to enable the successful recommissioning of the Vulnerable Victim Advocate.
7. The VVA provides advocacy for people who have experienced or witnessed:
  - Domestic abuse
  - Sexual violence or child sexual exploitation
  - Hate crime
  - Female Genital Mutilation
  - Forced Marriage
8. The Vulnerable Victim Advocate will continue with good practice advocating for victims at MARAC and supporting them in court, including family courts a place of vulnerability for victims as the civil proceedings fall out the remit of special measure and witness care.
9. The role will continue to embed an integrated victim service. Throughout 2016, the VVA has achieved this through:
  - a. Working across different police departments to help officers to identify vulnerable victims
  - b. Inclusion in the City of London Police, and Corporation, Domestic Abuse HR Policies, offering free, confidential support and advice

- c. Regular meetings to anonymously review and action plan children's social care and adult social care cases where domestic abuse is present or suspected
  - d. Engagement with sex worker support services in the City to set up a link for support to women at risk of abuse, violence and sexual exploitation
  - e. Training Housing Estate staff on domestic abuse awareness
10. Going forward into 2017, there will be further integration. 'Access to support' is a key priority for the City of London's response to domestic abuse and VAWG.
11. Work will continue with the Housing Estates including training and the establishment of clear referral pathways for all staff, including maintenance and cleaning staff, to consistently respond to matters they may see or hear that cause concern.
12. Presentations will also be given to Environmental Health and Trading Standards. This takes forward key learning from the Case Review of a Serious Incident concluded in August 2016.
13. As part of a domestic abuse awareness event at Homerton Hospital in 2016, the VVA engaged with a wide audience of health visitors, nurses and hospital staff. In 2017, further engagement will embed the VVA role within victim care responses by the Homerton, other hospitals and GP surgeries accessed by City residents.
14. Engagement and awareness work has already started by the VVA with private health and dental clinics in the City.

## **Housing**

15. The Domestic Abuse Coordinator has met with Housing to support the implementation of a referral and identification process for staff witnessing domestic abuse.
16. Training will be taking place in April and May to enable two officers in each estate office to carry out a DASH risk assessment. The Vulnerable Victim Advocate will be involved in delivering the training.
17. Case studies will be used to deliver specific examples linked to the audience's line of work for example repeated calls out to repair damaged walls/doors that look like someone has punched them.

## **Safeguarding Children and domestic abuse**

18. The Safeguarding Children from the Experience of Domestic Abuse Policy will detail how City services will respond effectively to safeguard and care for children experiencing domestic abuse.

19. The Policy was brought to the December Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Forum for consultation with local partners on interventions the Corporation could implement to support children.
20. The Forum identified a number of ideas based on their experience and expertise of working with children. Non-threatening and non-stigmatising engagement was noted as being vital in addition to play-based therapy and support.
21. The strategic action plan will detail key actions for children and young people such as family intervention for all family members in addition to health relationship work within schools and City Gateway youth service.
22. The Safeguarding Children from the Experience of Domestic Abuse Policy will be signed off in February 2017 and the recommendations will be included in the Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Strategic Action Plan.

### **Domestic Abuse Profile**

23. The City of London Police Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB) attended the December Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Forum to present the latest figures from the Domestic Abuse Profile.
24. There have been 210 domestic crimes reported between May 2015 and April 2016 a 39% increase compared to 128 domestic crimes reported in the previous year
25. Of the 210 domestic crimes reported:
  - 40% (85) of those reported occurred on the street
  - 75% (157) involved no injury
  - 86% (182) were assessed at a low/medium fear level
  - 76% (161) of victims were female, white and young (aged 19-29 years old) and living outside of the City (19% (41) were City residents)
  - 77% (162) of perpetrators were current or ex-partners
  - 73% (154) reported to the police were by 999 calls or callers to the front desk
26. To increase the City's awareness and develop a holistic profile, inclusion of information from community and voluntary sector services will now be collected. In order to have a standardised response, information has been requested from all services to see what they currently collect.
27. In February the FIB will analyse this information and identify common themes of data collected between community and voluntary sector and statutory partners.
28. All partners will then be asked to send this information to the Domestic Abuse Coordinator who will be the single point of contact, passing it on to be profiled by FIB.

29. The profile will now be a standing item on the Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Forum agenda for quarterly review. The outcome of this review will be presented to the Safer City Partnership Committee through this report.

### **MARAC update**

30. There have been no MARAC cases since the last Safer City Partnership Committee.
31. To further the efficiency of future MARACs, the Chair and Coordinator have composed a tactical options list detailing support, protection and civil action for victims, perpetrators and their children.
32. A MARAC development half day will be organised for February for partners to refresh their awareness about risk assessments, referrals, their responsibilities with action planning and the role of the Vulnerable Victim Advocate. This training will be led by SafeLives.

### **Directory of Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Services**

33. Work is underway on a Directory of Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence support services covering the City, pan-London and national services.
34. A proforma template has been sent to all services, requesting information on their service to be added into the directory. The directory will cover the following areas:
- City services
  - Domestic abuse victim services
  - Sexual violence victim services
  - Children and young people
  - Perpetrator education
  - Housing
  - Specialist services working with under-represented communities
  - Legal
  - National services
35. Partner agencies have been asked to complete this by 20 January and an update on the Directory will be brought to the March 2017 Forum.

### **City workers domestic abuse awareness training pilot**

36. The Vulnerable Victim Advocate, Domestic Abuse Coordinator and the Director of the domestic abuse charity Tender, delivered a training pilot in December to Lloyds Banking Group as part of 16 Days of Action.
37. Training was given to 19 attendees from covering HR, Retail Change, Retail Learning, Graduates, Group Operations, Community Bank, Risk and the Lloyds Foundation.

38. All participants found the training positive and helpful. At the end of the training a group evaluation found:

- The training helped people be aware of different categories/type of domestic abuse
- Understand Power and Control
- Be clearer on identifying triggers and the consequences of missed opportunities to disclose during line manager or colleague to colleague conversation
- Statistics on domestic abuse helpful as they showed that it is very common problem and if not dealt with in right way or on time can lead to serious consequences
- There should be a change in attitude/culture of line management and shift to emotional line management.

39. The training blueprint will be used for future engagement with City businesses with Lloyds Banking Group noting they will support the Corporation in this promotion.

### **Training on engaging with perpetrators of domestic abuse**

40. In 2016, the City started commissioning Positive Change in Tower Hamlets to work with perpetrators alongside the rest of the family (a worker for the perpetrators, and a separate worker for the victim and children) as a holistic, whole-family approach to perpetrators understanding the impacts of their behaviour.

41. Additionally in 2016, the administration of MARAC was evolved to make sure that actions for perpetrators were involved in the action plan to minimise risk.

42. To enable perpetrators to choose to attend a perpetrator programme is vital to its success as research suggests that those who volunteer are more likely to stop, or significantly reduce, abusive behaviour over those who attend programmes through court order.

43. Training professionals who work with perpetrators, such as social workers and police officers, will commence in March 2017.

For more information on any matters in this paper contact Robin Newman, Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator & Community Safety Officer:

[Robin.Newman@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Robin.Newman@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

Chris Pelham

Assistant Director, People

[Chris.Pelham@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Chris.Pelham@cityoflondon.gov.uk)