

Meeting date: 28th September 2022

Report to: CPH communities and Leisure

Subject/report title: Domestic abuse position update

Report from: Caroline Murray

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Wards affected:

- All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege
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Public/private report: Public

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide a summary position of the management of domestic abuse and commissioning intentions for a specialist community support service.

2. Decision(s) recommended

- 2.1 To note the proposed intentions for the future provision of specialist community support for those aged 16 plus who are subjected to domestic abuse.

3. Matters for Consideration

- 3.1 Public Health is seeking to commission a community-based specialist domestic abuse service for those aged 16 plus, who reside in Solihull and are or have been subjected to domestic abuse. This supports the delivery of the DVA Strategy which has previously been shared with the Health and Well-being Board and Scrutiny.
- 3.2 An open competitive tender opportunity is scheduled to be released at the end of September 2022, with a new service ready for implementation 1st April 2023.

4. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

- 4.1 The National Statement of Expectation¹ sets out how local areas should commission effective services to ensure a whole system response, allowing victim and survivors to get the help they need. This is reinforced in Domestic Abuse statutory guidance released summer 2022. The Serious Violence Duty² also places a responsibility on Local Authorities to work with Partners on a response to serious violence, this includes domestic abuse. Strengthening protection of survivors/victims of Domestic abuse is a shared national and local objective.
- 4.2 This is currently not a mandated requirement, although the Domestic Abuse Commissioner is leading discussions at a national level to formalise the approach.
- 4.3 A comprehensive needs assessment undertaken in 2021 and subsequent consultation process have provided evidence of a continued need to commission specialist support.
- 4.4 SMBC has commissioned a community service for a number of years. The current service model has evolved over time, with changes being largely reactive. This has led to multiple contracts, different providers and contract timelines.
- 4.5 Re-procurement provides an opportunity to strategically plan the requirements of a new effective and efficient service model that reflects local need, best practice and emerging trends.
- 4.6 The intention is to use an Outcomes focused approach, to promote innovation and allow interested parties the opportunity to help shape how the Service is operationally delivered. This will be supplemented by functional requirements, which will articulate the key principles. These include:
- Single point of access for all clients
 - Provision of information, advice and support to all victim/survivors through a range of formats to include telephone, webchat, group work and face-to-face.
 - Safety prioritised
 - A Service that is equitable and accessible to all victim/survivors
 - Evidence based interventions
 - Service that is co-ordinated, flexible and responsive to individual clients need and risk
 - Dedicated advocacy for those in those in temporary accommodation and accessing Sanctuary

¹ March 2022, Violence against Women and Girls, National Statement of Expectations, Home Office

² Serious Violence duty: Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022

- Highly visible and widely promoted
- Delivered by a competent staffing team

4.7 The financial value of the service has been increased to allow for the Service capacity to be expanded.

4.8 Appendix 1 provides a visual of the proposed model.

5. Reasons for recommending preferred option

5.1 The Service will be part of a wider local offer of specialist services. Refuge, Childrens Domestic Abuse Community Support are commissioned by SMBC. In addition, IRIS is commissioned by the Integrated Care Partnership (formerly Birmingham& Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group), and MARAC IDVA's, Court IDVA's and LGBT IDVA's are commissioned by the West Midlands Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner. The provider will link with the above and other relevant organisations to improve pathways, and work as a whole.

5.2 The inputs, outputs and expectations requirements of the proposed Service are based on learning which has emerged from assessments, consultation, homicide reviews and national guidance. The Service is anticipated too:

- Positively address gaps identified in the DA Needs Assessment 2021 and the focused consultation in July 2022
- Strengthen access to training for frontline practitioners
- Support delivery of objectives and commitments set out in the DA Strategy 2022 and the Domestic Abuse Delivery Plan 2022-2025
- Comply with Home Office Domestic Abuse Statutory guidance
- Respond to recommendations from domestic homicide reviews, including but not limited to recognition of male victims, cultural competency, maintenance of specialist support, improving professionals identification and response to coercive control and stalking and harassment.

6. Implications and Considerations

6.1 State how the proposals in this report contribute to the priorities in the [Council Plan](#):

Priority:	Contribution:
People and Communities: 1. Improving outcomes for children and young people in Solihull.	Domestic abuse has a devastating physical, emotional and financial impact on adults and children who are subjected to it.

Priority:	Contribution:
2. Good quality, responsive, and dignified care and support for Adults in Solihull when they need it. 3. Take action to improve life chances and health outcomes in our most disadvantaged communities. 4. Enable communities to thrive.	
Economy: 5. Develop and promote the borough's economy, with a focus on revitalising our town and local centres. 6. Maximising the opportunities of UK Central and HS2. 7. Increase the supply of affordable and social housing that is environmentally sustainable.	Enter text.
Environment: 8. Enhance our natural environment, improve air quality and reduce net carbon emissions.	Enter text.
9. Promote employee wellbeing	Enter text.

6.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:

6.2.1 The Domestic Abuse Partnership Board have a statutory responsibility for commissioning decisions in relation to the assessment and provision of DA Safe Accommodation and are accountable for leading the local approach to responding to domestic abuse.

6.3 Financial implications:

6.3.1. The service will be funded through the domestic abuse budget which is held by the Public Health directorate.

6.4 Legal implications:

6.4.1 Provision of the Service is not currently mandatory, but absence of a service would likely be critiqued as part of any subsequent adult or child review where domestic abuse was a contributory factor.

6.5 Risk implications, including Risk Appetite:

6.5.1 Any person being subjected to domestic abuse is at potential risk of serious harm. Specialist support is recognised as a key factor in safeguarding.

6.5.2 There are no significant risks identified in relation to commissioning of a new service.

6.6 Equality implications:

6.6.1 While domestic abuse can affect anyone, regardless of their characteristics or circumstances, there are known risk factors associated with a greater likelihood of experiencing or perpetrating it. Research shows that it is a gendered crime, with mental ill health, substance misuse, poverty, sexuality, disability, age and ethnicity as factors which increase risk and impact. The proposed model includes a requirement to ensure equitable access that is capable of meeting all need and seeks to reduce barriers to engagement.

6.6.2 This work stream will be delivered as part of our compliance with the National Violence against Women and Girls expectations and recognises the associated inequalities.

6.7 Linkages to our work with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Local Enterprise Partnership or the Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care System (ICS):

7. List of appendices referred to

Proposed Service Model

8. Background papers used to compile this report

8.1 DA Strategy 2022 – 2025

8.2 DA Needs Assessment 2021

8.3 DA Delivery plan 2022- 2025

8.4 Home Office Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance

9. List of other relevant documents

Proposed Service Model

The new service will need to be able to support any person Male & Female in Solihull aged over 16, who is suffering violence and/or abuse regardless of gender or ethnicity

Any person who requires support suffering violence and/or abuse after the point of referral should be able to access any of the of the services as and when needed

