

Subject:	Summary Report: Domestic Violence and Abuse, Sexual Violence and Violence against Women and Girls		
Date of Meeting:	28th November 2016		
Report of:	Executive Director Finance & Resources		
Contact Officer:	Name:	James Rowlands	Tel: 291032
	Email:	James.rowlands@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview in relation to Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA), Sexual Violence (SV) and Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), setting out the strategic context, describing the extent and impact of these crime types in the city, identify trends, issues and emerging risks, as well as summarising commissioning and partnership activity.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Neighbourhoods, Communities & Equalities Committee:

2.1 Notes the indicative timetable for the review of the city's VAWG Strategy, the proposal that this becomes a DVA, SV and VAWG Strategy, and agrees that the revised strategy is tabled at a future meeting for approval.

2.2 Notes that the reporting of DVA and SV is increasing and that:

2.2.1 While a re-commissioned specialist service is in place this is likely to operate within a reduced joint commissioning budget and will require outcomes to be prioritised.

2.2.2 There is a risk to the provision of prevention and recovery services, which are likely to be de-commissioned in 2017-18.

2.3 Advocates a comprehensive and detailed review of the response to these forms of violence and abuse across all service areas.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Strategic context

1.1. The current '*Brighton & Hove Violence against Women and Girls Strategy*' runs from 2012 – 2017. The strategy is focused around prevention and earlier intervention, provision of immediate support, protection and prosecution and partnership working. In practice, the strategy is delivered through the '*Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy 2014-17*' which includes an annual action plan relating to

Domestic Violence and Abuse, Sexual Violence and Harmful Practices, as well as some other forms of Violence against Women and Girls.

- 1.2. In relation to the wider strategic context, a key driver is the UK Government's '*Strategy to end violence against women and girls*'. This was recently revised and now runs from 2016-20. Alongside this strategy the UK Government has indicated it will publish a National Statement of Expectations (NSE) to make clear to local partnerships what good commissioning and service provision looks like. This will provide a blueprint, setting out core expectations.
- 1.3. Other key drivers include the priorities of the Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB) and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB), as well as the Police & Crime Commissioner's policing and crime objectives for 2017 – 21.
- 1.4. As the current VAWG Strategy runs out in 2017, it is proposed that this is reviewed. This is an opportunity to identify what has been delivered to date, consider emerging trends, issues and risks and ensure that the city has a strategy in place that means the response to these forms of violence and abuse are as collaborative, robust and effective as they can be. This review would be led by the Partnership Community Safety Team on behalf of the partnership, be co-produced with other key stakeholders, including Adult Social Care and Children's Services, as well as other statutory partners like the Police, Health and Voluntary and Community Sector partners. An outline of the key elements of a review is included in **Appendix One**.
- 1.5. A review is also an opportunity to ensure that the city's strategy continues to reflect the gender differences in the scale, incidence and effects of these forms of violence and abuse. This would mean sustaining the focus on women and girls, to reflect their disproportionate and cumulative experience of these forms of violence and abuse. However as the current strategy does not fully address the needs of men and boys who experience violence and abuse, nor the actions that should be taken to ensure they are able to get help and support, the review is an opportunity to ensure that these issues are also fully addressed. Additionally, given Brighton & Hove's population any strategy review must recognise the unique experiences of local communities, e.g. people from black and minority ethnic communities and those people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or who identify as trans*. For this reason it is proposed that any reviewed strategy refers more widely to DVA, SV and VAWG rather than VAWG only.
- 1.6. Any review will need to reflect the joint commissioning and delivery arrangements that are in place with East Sussex County Council, which is also likely to be reviewing its own strategy. It is proposed that the two authorities develop a shared strategy for DVA, SV and other forms of VAWG. This would set out common strategic aims and areas for focus across both East Sussex and Brighton & Hove, while also identifying each area specific aims and areas for focus. At an operational level, annual action plans would set out the deliverables to be achieved within the city's Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy.

Extent and impact

- 3.1 The Joint Strategy Needs Assessment was refreshed in 2016 and will be available from the end of November at <http://www.bhconnected.org.uk/content/needs-assessments>. Headline data on the extent and impact of these forms of violence and abuse are included in **Appendix Two**.

3.2 However, reported data about these forms of violence and abuse is an underestimate, since substantial numbers of people do not disclose such violence to the police or other agencies. Applying the latest prevalence rates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales to 2015 mid-year population estimates shows that:

- 7,639 women and girls aged 16-59, and 3,868 men and boys are estimated to have experienced domestic violence and abuse in the last year
- 2,515 women and girls, and 677 boys and men are estimated to have experienced any sexual assault in the last year
- 4,564 women and girls, and 2,321 boys and men are estimated to have experienced stalking in the last year.

3.3 It is estimated that the cost to services of domestic and sexual violence in the city is £35 million, with the human and emotional costs at £113 million.

Trends

3.4 Broadly, the current trend is one of increased reporting. E.g. At a national level:

- Since 2010, there have seen significant increases in the reporting of DVA and SV offences to the police
- In the 12 months to March 2015 there was a 31% increase in the number of DVA related crimes in England and Wales
- This is mirrored in relation to SV offences, with the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) noting a 36% in the year ending September 2015.

3.5 At a local level, with reference to Police data:

- DVA crimes and incidents show an increase of 35.16% between 2011 – 12 and 2015 – 16.
- Recorded SV offences show an increase of 107% between 2011 – 12 and 2015 – 16.

3.6 The increase is also evident in specialist services. Between September 2015 and March 2016 the providers of 'The Portal' (RISE with Survivors' Network and CGL) have reported levels of referrals that are considerably higher than projected. In the most recent 6 month period (April – September 2016), across The Portal Service as a whole, there has been a 28% increase in referrals and an 11% increase in clients when compared to the previous 6 months.

Issues and emerging risks

3.7 The impact of increasing demand on specialist services has been pronounced. Providers of The Portal have reported that there is insufficient capacity to meet current and future demand.

3.8 There is a consequent impact on service provision and there are a number of consequent risks arising from this lack of capacity which include:

- Harder to access support (i.e. 'live' pick up and dropped calls)
- Increased eligibility thresholds
- Reduced capacity to support victim/survivors
- Reduction in availability of prevention and recovery interventions
- Reduced support for professionals, including contribution to wider case management.

3.9 The issue of increasing demand was first raised at the NCE committee in January 2016, with officers discussing this in more detail at Safe in the City Partnership Board in April 2016 and June 2016.

3.10 As the bulk of city council funding for specialist services is allocated through the Partnership Community Safety Team budget (including funding that was transferred from Housing Related Support) it was agreed that a corporate stakeholder's officer group would meet to review this issue and bring a council wide perspective. Meeting in April and October 2016 this considered:

- Profiling the current demand for specialist DVA and SV services, as well as the impact of increased reporting
- Identifying the impact on specialist services, including risks and reductions in capacity particularly around earlier intervention and recovery offer
- Identifying the impact on children and adult services where DVA or SV abuse is an issue, including multi-agency working and access to additional support
- Agreeing what risks accepting or identity mitigating actions, including further investment.

3.11 To date corporate stakeholders have been unable to identify any additional investment to manage the increase in demand.

3.12 As a result the commissioner, through the Commissioning Group, has sought to prioritise those at the greatest risk or need within the current financial envelope. In the first instance this has included the development of a demand management plan with the providers, focused on ensuring a consistent, timely response to referrals.

3.13 However given the demand pressures, the commissioner has also re-allocated funding from preventative work to the point of access for The Portal, increasing staff capacity within front line community based services. Going into 2016/17, this meant the loss of both a 0.5 FTE Family Worker and 0.5 FTE Service User Engagement Worker (who had supported the service user group).

3.14 During 2016-17 there has been continued upward demand pressure. Consequently a further re-allocation of funding in year has been proposed by the commissioner, with funding re-allocated again from preventative work to front line community based services from the end of December 2016. If this reduction is implemented as planned this means therapeutic group work interventions will cease, leaving one targeted programme and a small number of open access sessions.

3.15 Moving forward into 2017-18 further reductions are likely. In addition to managing any further increase in demand:

- The council's budget is currently being developed and all services (including Partnership Community, and within that the funding for domestic and sexual violence services) have been asked to develop proposals to reduce spend. These proposals will be considered at Policy, Resources and Growth Committee on 8th December 2016
- Also, existing Home Office funding totalling £0.035m is ending.

3.16 To manage any loss of funding and respond to further increases in reporting, it is likely that the remaining prevention and recovery offer will be eliminated in 2017-18 if additional investment cannot be found.

- 3.17 Other mitigations have been considered, however these are not viable. For example, while the council can seek additional funding from some sources (such as central government) it would not be feasible to seek funding from other sources because the existing specialist service providers already have a strong track record of securing added value through fundraising from charitable and corporate funders.
- 3.18 While the approach described above, prioritising those at the most risk and need, is proportionate given the constraints of the current financial envelope in the face of increased demand, it is important to note that there is a longer term impact if prevention and recovery interventions are lost. There will be reduced opportunities to help victim/survivors to cope and recover. These victim/survivors are also likely to represent to point of access services seeking help and support. In the long term this will not help to reduce future demand for specialist or indeed city council services.
- 3.19 Additionally the position as outlined in 3.13 to 3.16 will have impact on the city's capacity to respond to the findings from the Fairness Commission. The commission made specific recommendations relating to these forms of violence and abuse:
- a. The council and its partners should review funding for VAWG & SV specialist services, so that provision is protected and, where appropriate, increased to ensure help and support are in place to meet rising demand in terms of immediate safety and wellbeing, as well as longer term recovery
 - b. The council and its partners should refresh the commitment of the city's leaders to a strategic response to DVA, RSVA and VAWG and ensure that it is core business for the city.
 - c. The council and its partners should provide a specialist advocacy position for survivors to support recovery past the crisis stage and highlight any ongoing issues (A similar role to the Mind/Mindout advocacy service but specialised in domestic abuse).
- 3.20 In light of the position described above, the corporate stakeholder's officer group agreed that the council could take additional steps to ensure that its own services are able to respond as effectively as possible to these forms of violence and abuse. Those affected by DVA, SVA and VAWG are likely to have diverse and complex needs which need to be addressed in their entirety in order to achieve sustainable, long term outcomes. The council could for example undertake a comprehensive and detailed review of the response to these forms of violence and abuse across all service areas in order to be assured that all possible steps are being taken to maximise opportunities for victim/survivors and their families to be safe and recover and for perpetrators to be held to account.

Commissioning and partnership activity

- 3.21 Since September 2015 the Brighton & Hove Partnership Community Safety Team and the Safer East Sussex Team have been working together to deliver priorities in relation to DVA, SV and other forms of VAWG. A 'Joint Unit' is in place and is charged with delivering shared priorities in relation to these forms of violence and abuse.
- 3.22 Current activities include:

- Shared joint commissioning of domestic and sexual abuse services – through The Portal
- The integration of other functions like the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), with an ongoing pan Sussex review of this process
- The roll out of a Champions' Network and the DVA, SV and VAWG Training Prospectus
- Awareness raising activity, including as part of planned events like the 16 Days of Action.

3.23 Planned activities include:

- Working with Sussex Police and other partners to roll out further awareness raising work around Rape and Serious Sexual Offences in the Night Time Economy
- Developing 'safety netting' advice and step down tools to enable a wider range of professionals to support victim/survivors
- Working with the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OSPCC) to support Safe:Space Sussex and the evaluation of the 'Self Evident' app with the aim of making it easier to record and report hate crime. This will consider extension to domestic violence and abuse, sexual violence.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 To manage the continued upward demand pressure within the current financial envelope (and in future, in light of risks arising from proposals to reduce spend) commissioners will have to prioritise those victims at the greatest risk or with the highest needs, meaning that the threshold for services are raised and reductions are directed towards preventative services, which principally support children and non-abusive parents. To mitigate this impact, commissioners can continue to develop commissioning and partnership activity with other statutory and voluntary sector partners. However a comprehensive and detailed review of the response to these forms of violence and abuse across all council service would provide additional assurance that all possible steps are being taken to maximise opportunities for victim/survivors and their families to be safe and recover and for perpetrators to be held to account. Having a refreshed strategy will provide a framework within which such activity could be undertaken.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 In relation to the crime types, a number of consultations have taken place, including the Domestic Violence Needs Assessment in 2011 as well as a VAWG Equality Impact Assessment in 2014. Most recently, a consultation event was undertaken with victim/survivors in March 2016 as part of a submission by the Violence against Women and Girls Forum to the Fairness Commission. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has also been revised with this process including a call for evidence from local partners.
- 5.2 In relation to the commissioning approach there has been an ongoing dialogue with providers and stakeholders, principally through the local Commissioning Group.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 While DVA, SV and other forms of VAWG are both a local priority and an area of increased focus from national government, specialist services will be required to respond to increased reporting of DVA and SV within a reduced financial envelope unless alternative funding is identified. This means that service provision in the city will reduce. Despite this, the council has an opportunity to respond proactively to this agenda by ensuring that all possible steps are being taken to maximise opportunities for victim/survivors and their families to be safe and recover and for perpetrators to be held to account across its services.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The 2016/17 Council's net budget for Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategies is £0.725m. This includes £1.340m to commission services and contributions of £0.750m from partner organisations as well as budgets for staffing. The budget for 2017/18 for all council services will be considered at Policy, Resources and Growth (PRG) Committee in February 2017 and any savings proposals will be reviewed by PRG on 8th December 2016.
- 7.2 Implementation of a comprehensive and detailed review across all services will need to be met from current budget resources for the service areas concerned.

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks

Date: 15/11/16

Legal Implications:

- 7.3 The Authority has a range of powers available to support the work relating to domestic violence. Where this involves expenditure then there will need to be clear decision made supporting that funding. In this situation the Committee is simply being asked to note the current situation and to support a review of the provision. There are no legal implications in relation to this.

Lawyer Consulted: Simon Court

Date: 11/11/16

Equalities Implications:

- 7.4 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has already been carried out in relation to DVA, RSVA and VAWG. Equalities implications are reviewed in the Strategic Assessment of Crime and Disorder and the Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy, both of which are refreshed annually.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.5 The proposed approach has implications for sustainability including support for victim/survivors in achieving Safety, Health & Happiness: Encouraging active, sociable, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 7.6 In the short term the reduction in funding means that service provision, including the risk management process for the highest risk victims of DVA and the

specialist support for victims of DVA and RVA, will reduce increasing the impact of crime and disorder.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Next steps in reviewing the local strategy
2. Summary data - impact of Domestic Violence and Abuse, Sexual Violence and Violence against Women and Girls in Brighton & Hove

Next steps in reviewing the local Strategy

<p>Consultation</p>	<p>Consultation process for identifying which services are needed locally and a forum to ensure victims and service providers can share their experiences and views:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online – residents • Focus groups – service users • Online – service managers <p>Consultation process for identifying the impact of local commissioning and how outcomes will be measured, what counts as ‘success’ and what victims can expect from services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with commissioners <p>Partnership representatives met to discuss strategic aims and priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder consultation event
<p>Service users</p>	<p>Have a process for measuring victims satisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police satisfaction survey • Provider data
<p>Needs assessment</p>	<p>Understand need by developing joint needs assessments with access to all available data, evidence, service standards and intelligence from local providers with input from LAs, health, CCGs, police, education, housing, and the third sector. Map local issues from crime and health data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardised approach to present data on prevalence, impact and emerging trends and risks across Brighton & Hove and East Sussex <p>Have a robust and useful local data set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardised light touch performance framework to enable ongoing review and identifying of emerging risks and issues <p>How training provided to local professionals is being evaluated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data from local training programmes
<p>Key priorities</p>	<p>Areas of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts the victim at the centre; • Takes a strategic, system-wide approach to commissioning; • Is locally-led and safeguards individuals throughout; • Raises local awareness of the issues and involves, engages and empowers communities to seek, design and deliver solutions. <p>Aligned to UK Government’s Violence against Women and Girls Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention • Provision of service • Partnership working • Pursuing perpetrators <p>Integrated into priorities within the Brighton & Hove Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy and the East Sussex Safer Communities Business Plan.</p>

Summary data

The following data is taken from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and is for 2015/16 unless otherwise indicated.

Domestic violence and abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,575 domestic violence incidents and crimes were reported to the police in Brighton & Hove, an increase of 4.7% on 2014/15 • There were 352 finalised domestic violence prosecutions, of which 260 were successful (74%) • 448 referrals were made to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), for the highest risk victims of domestic violence & abuse. There were 428 children associated with these cases • In 2014/15 635 referrals were made to the IDVA service provided by RISE Domestic Abuse Service, which works with the highest risk victims of domestic violence & abuse¹ • Locally, in July 2016, of 385 children subject of a Child Protection Plan, 45% had parental domestic violence recorded as a factor • 126 Safeguarding Adult enquiries were flagged as linked to domestic violence (6% of all adult safeguarding enquiries undertaken). • Between 2012 and 2014 three domestic homicide reviews were completed. One 'Near Miss' Review was also been completed. A further domestic homicide review has commenced in 2016-17.
Stalking and harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on police recorded crimes and incidents of stalking became available as of April 2014. In 2015/16 there were 37 police recorded offences of stalking
Sexual Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 667 sexual offences were reported to Police • 156 referrals were made to the Saturn Centre (the local Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), which provides a range of services to anyone who has been raped or sexually assaulted) an increase of 14% compared with the previous year • In 2014/15 159 referrals were made to the ISVA service provided by Survivors' Network, which works with victims of rape, sexual violence & abuse² • 7% of Safeguarding Adult enquiries were flagged as linked to sexual violence
Sex Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data about the scale and extent of prostitution and the sex industry is limited. In 2016 a Rapid Needs Assessment is being completed looking at Sex Work in Brighton & Hove to better understand need
Harmful Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported levels of Harmful Practices remain low to inform the local picture of need, Public Health Evidence Briefings were produced including estimates of those historically affected, or currently at risk • Mandatory recording by acute health trusts of the number of patients who have had FGM or have a family history of FGM was introduced in September 2014. In 2015/16, 23 patients were recorded as having had FGM.

¹ Full year data is only available for 2014/15 for specialist services because during 2015/15 RISE and Survivors' Network moved onto a new case management system as part of the development of 'The Portal' which is a single point of access and helps victim/survivors of domestic and sexual violence and abuse to find advice and support in Brighton & Hove and East Sussex

² See footnote 1.