

REPORT TO:	Safer Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	17 September 2013
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, Communities
PORTFOLIO:	Communities
SUBJECT:	Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
WARDS:	All

1.	PURPOSE OF REPORT
1.1	To update the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board in relation to the activities being supported across the Borough in response to domestic abuse and sexual violence.
2.	RECOMMENDATION: That members of the Board consider and comment on any aspect of this report.
3.	SUPPORTING INFORMATION
3.1	Halton Domestic Abuse Forum (HDAF) Strategic Group was established to provide overall direction, control management and guidance for the response to Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence within Halton. The group acts as a multi-agency partnership board of lead officers and key representatives, which take strategic decisions aimed at tackling domestic abuse and sexual violence in their widest forms and provide support to all victims within our area. The Forum is responsible for determining and implementing policy, coordinating activity between agencies, and facilitating training. It evaluates the responses we have locally for victims, children living in households where domestic violence is a feature and considers provision for perpetrators. The Forum promotes inter-agency cooperation, encourages the development of effective working relationships between different services and agencies, based on mutual understanding and trust. The forum focuses on developing and sustaining a high level of commitment for the protection of adult victims' children and young people affected by domestic abuse.
3.2	The Home Office definition of domestic abuse has been amended from March 2013 with two important changes: firstly, the inclusion of and the recognition of 16 and 17-year-olds as victims of domestic abuse and; secondly, spelling out controlling and coercive behaviour in the definition strengthens the message that all domestic violence is abuse but not all domestic abuse is violence. Many victims are constantly being controlled by their partners but may not realise the implications on their safety and

	safety of their children.
3.3	<p>Women experience an average of 35 incidents of domestic abuse before reporting an incident to the police. It's one of the most under reported, under discussed and under researched social problems in the UK. Keir Starmer, the Director of Public Prosecutions, said the UK is at "risk of developing a new culture of domestic violence". While the numbers of domestic violence incidents has fallen over the past decade, the trend has been bucked by an increase in domestic violence among young people. Young women aged between 16 and 19 are at the highest risk of sexual assault (17.9%), stalking (8.5%) and domestic abuse (12.7%). The impact of the new Home Office definition to include 16 and 17 year olds may have future resource implications.</p>
3.4	<p>It is far to simplistic to assume that by removing the perpetrator from the family setting, the issues of domestic abuse will disappear. In many cases victims are not supportive of the perpetrator being removed from the family setting and will continue to have a relationship with the perpetrator for numerous and various reasons including financial dependence, emotional dependence, cultural norms and religious beliefs. In many cases, victims will feel that they cannot cope without the perpetrator. Subsequently, Halton have recognised the importance of offering locally delivered perpetrator interventions that will address their behavior and seek to prevent further domestic abuse.</p> <p>In response, a locally delivered perpetrator programme is currently under development. Initial discussions with Halton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and a locally commissioned provider with have been well received; funding is in place to deliver one 26 week programme for 8 male perpetrators. The programme will be initially delivered as a pilot however, if successful the CCG have agreed to assist in determining a sustainable pathway.</p> <p>This service will only be available to adult male perpetrators as some of the content will be delivered in a group setting.</p> <p>The service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver a 26 week (RESPECT) perpetrator programme and evidence based one to one interventions for men wishing to change their abusive behaviour. • To ensure that perpetrators are supported to change and sustain their motivation. • To liaise with existing victim focussed support services in order to identify current or previous partners as well as children. • To maintain the safety of the victim and children throughout the

	<p>process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain interdependencies across pathways and organisations. <p>The local provider is undertaking training to enable them to facilitate this training in October 2013, the intention is to launch the Voluntary Perpetrator Programme in November 2013.</p>
3.5	<p>The Children and Enterprise Directorate are currently commissioning a service for children and young people affected by domestic violence, based on an analysis of need in Halton. This service will provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to parents that are victims of domestic abuse which gets parents to understand the impact of domestic abuse on how they parent and how domestic abuse has an impact on the children and young people's behaviour. • Direct work around children/ young people safety planning where the young person is still in the situation • Longer term recovery work therapeutic approach where the perpetrator is no longer within the family. • Support social care with pre- court proceedings process and provide information and assessments where required. <p>It is intended that this service will be commissioned by September 2013, with the service starting from October 2013.</p>
3.6	<p>Following the amendment of the definition of domestic violence to include 16 and 17 years old young people, the government has funded Co-Ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) to support local authorities to train a Young Persons Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (YIDVA), and to develop performance reporting systems to help each area to identify their local issues. The YIDVA for Halton has recently started and will be attending training by September 2013.</p>
3.7	<p>Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASASC) have published a review of the service (Cheshire and Merseyside) - Supporting survivors: The value.</p> <p>This report summarises the hard and soft findings of the review and the importance of the service in the current environment - an environment that is financially challenging but where demand is increasing. The profile of sexual violence has increased on the political, health and criminal justice agenda, but better funding is required to enable RASASC to support and counsel more survivors through the legal system and beyond, and to launch vital prevention schemes.</p> <p>RASASC acknowledges all forms of sexual violence including rape, sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse, sexual harassment, rape in marriage, forced marriage and so-called honour-based violence, female genital</p>

	<p>mutilation, trafficking and sexual exploitation, and ritual abuseii. The organisation's mission is to support survivors of these sexually violent crimes, and advocate on their behalf. RASASC employ a staff team of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors; Specialist Counsellors; Senior Management; and Specialist Administrators. Time lapsed since the event, gender, ethnicity and migrant status of the survivor is irrelevant.</p>
4.	POLICY IMPLICATIONS
4.1	There are no policy implications contained within this report.
5.0	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCILS PRIORITIES
5.1	<p>A Healthy Halton</p> <p>To remove barriers that disable people and contribute to poor health by working across partnership to address the wider determinants of health such as unemployment, education and skills, housing, crime and environment.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preventable cause of death 2. Preventable cause of infant mortality 3. Preventable cause of mental health 4. Preventable cases presenting at A & E
5.2	<p>Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton</p> <p>Women who are unemployed have been found to have the highest risk of domestic violence. This links to vulnerability such as lack of financial resources to leave, greater social isolation, less access to informal and formal support networks and potentially more forms of abuse available to the suspect.</p> <p>To maximise an individuals potential to increase and manage their income and mange their income, including access to appropriate, supportive advice services assisting victims to develop better financial management skills and to address debt through appropriate sign posting.</p>
5.3	<p>Children and Young People in Halton</p> <p>Children and young people in Halton are emotionally, physically and sexually healthy and Children and young people will feel safe at home, in school and in their communities. For example, ensuring homes are healthy safe environments through offering support to parents and providing access for aftercare support for victims of sexual violence whether a child or young person.</p>

5.4	<p>A Safer Halton</p> <p>To understand and tackle the problem of domestic abuse in all its forms. For example, through ensuring adult victims have access to protective and supportive measures reduces the level of domestic incidents and the subsequent impact on the environment with regards to crime and ASB.</p>
6.0	<p>RISK ANALYSIS</p> <p>These are contained within the report.</p>
7.0	<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>Services are delivered via commissioning services to ensure that they deliver value for money and achieve the desired outcomes</p>
8.0	<p>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES</p>
8.1	<p>In the Crown Prosecution Service has published a comprehensive report on the numbers and nature of cases of false allegations of domestic and sexual violence in the UK. It revealed that the number is far lower than is commonly thought (and encouraged by some sections of the press), and that those that are made, far from being malicious, often involve vulnerable people. This national report will help move debate onto the real solutions to improving justice for women and girls, including the provision of specialist support services.</p>
9.0	<p>LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972</p> <p>None under the meaning of the Act</p>