

Minutes of 'Domestic Abuse' Working Group Meeting

Held on 25th March 2008 at 1.30pm

Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Cllr John Stockton (Chair), Cllr Geoffrey Swift, Cllr Sue Blackmore Howard Cockcroft – Operational Director Culture and Leisure Services, Sally Clarke Domestic Violence Co-ordinator, Inspector Simon Blackwell, Marissa Hankinson Relationship Centre, Janet Guy Culture and Leisure Services.

Item	Details	Action
1	<p>Apologies: Cllr Peter Murray, Cllr Martha Lloyd Jones, Cllr Linda Redhead, Clare Myring, Cllr Martha Lloyd Jones, Cllr Ernie Ratcliffe, Lindsay Bowker Relationship Centre.</p> <p>Chair welcomed the group and introductions were made.</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of meeting held on 19th February and matters arising</p> <p><u>Item 3</u> - One of the four priorities identified by the group is Funding, which has been sorted in the interim, 3 year funding to be an agenda item at the next meeting.</p>	
3	<p>Summary of the national report on the cost of domestic abuse to society - Sally Clarke</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally domestic abuse costs £23 billion a year to society in England and Wales, data for Halton as smaller borough problem no worse. Domestic Abuse Forum has multi agency commitments to come up with initiatives, no financial resources. Figures in the report are 4 years old and not all cases are reported, (therefore would be increased figures). • LPSA funding 07/08 supported the Relationship Centre. Currently no financial commitment from Primary Care Trust (PCT) in Halton, but huge costs are incurred through health care, Midwife, Health Visitors, etc. • Magistrates at Runcorn Court are given domestic abuse training and basic awareness of signs, effects and impacts to look for. • Housing - Sanctuary Scheme is based on invest to save, costs approximately £800 in comparison to costs of moving a family of £3,500-£4,000, saving £3,000. Sanctuary measures involve locks, doors, lighting and CCTV, 31 properties in Halton have benefited. • Estimated £2.7 billion economic output through time off work. • The group agreed to re-name to domestic abuse not 'violence'. • To prevent domestic abuse need to make people aware of the problem and devastation to lives. • Insp SB spoke asked about percentage or figures related to children affected. MH said the Relationship Centre have secured 3 years funding of £100,000 from Comic Relief to work with young males in Halton. 	
4	<p>Domestic Abuse Forum Action Plan – Sally Clarke</p> <p>The group has 4 strategic priorities based around intervention:</p> <p>1. To increase access to support & health services for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence.</p> <p>PCT have agreed £10,000 (50%) towards the cost of a part-time Midwife for 2008/09 (£20,000 for 12 months) currently has 6 clients. The group asked what contribution other PCT's in the area made.</p> <p>Chair asked SC to look at future budgets and proposals, etc required for domestic abuse for the working group to consider at the next meeting, for recommendations to be put forward to the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board and Executive Board. Insp SB mentioned sexual violence being high on the Government Agenda, 58% perpetrator usually partner or ex-partner (7-8% stranger), high alcohol related. SC Working closely with Children and Social Care to offer support, in 2007/08</p>	SC

	<p>Kings Cross Project supported counselling for 5-19 year olds. Wirral have a Family Safety Unit – drop in centre with multi-agency commitment (Police, Nurse, Domestic Violence Advocate), all specialist staff under one roof.</p> <p>2. To continue to improve the criminal justice response to domestic abuse & sexual violence.</p> <p>Positive changes over the last 12 months, court success at 77%, above national level and rest of Cheshire. Cheshire Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) currently being developed at Leyton Hospital in Crewe, get Halton involved, only facility in Cheshire. Insp SB spoke of Halton being advanced with options for clients. Reduce number of repeat victims, individuals well known to the police, Sanctuary measures in place. The Relationship Centre contact all referrals 50-60% refuse at first, offer an independent role not police or social services.</p> <p>3. To maximise the prevention of domestic abuse & sexual violence.</p> <p>Training staff and raising awareness in the public, so people learn and understand. Schools booklet/leaflet symptoms of domestic abuse, 85% alcohol as a factor.</p> <p>4. To improve data collection & information systems.</p> <p>18 months data report information collected, difficult with health, shared at the Forum meeting quarterly, data could be better if every agency could send monthly. SC has spoken with relevant school Liaison Officers regarding education material. Insp SB asked for SC to contact if any additional support was required from Liaison Officers.</p> <p>HC asked about the indicator column not being populated yet. SC confirmed this was the first draft of the plan, which will go to the Strategy Group 26th March 2008 and Safer Halton Partnership in April 2008.</p> <p>MH; ‘Talk Don’t Walk’ a direct delivery education resource pilot in Warrington April 2004 was recognised at a national level, early intervention and prevention of running away. Education Resource Packs for KS2 (7-11yr olds) KS3 (11-14yr olds) included lesson plans, work sheets looking at relationships, changes, choices and consequence of choices. Launch of web-based materials in September 07 with Everton FC becoming ambassadors Feb 08. No sign up from Halton schools, all have been approached, currently trying to work with Vikings. In Warrington 24 schools out of 88 have taken up. The group suggested approaching Children and Young People Strategic Director Gerald Meehan, also to include on school circular. Insp SB confirmed currently recruiting with Lorraine Crane (C&YP) for Runaways Team Coordinator role.</p>	
5	<p>Forced Rape Steering Group – Inspector Simon Blackwell</p> <p>Insp SB sits on the Cheshire Rape and Sexual Assault Steering Group who meet quarterly. Last meeting discussed SARC project as discussed in Item 4. Terms of Reference of the steering group available if anyone would like to see. Officers in the Police Force are undertaking extra training, increased service for early evidence kits, and mouthwash in all cars, collection gowns. Poster campaign of ‘Safe not Sorry’ for secondary schools toilet doors. Indicators are going up the agenda, Rape Action Plan to follow nationally. Share information and feed back to this group, opportunity to play an active role. Chair asked if SC could attend the steering group meetings? Insp SB would enquire and confirm with SC, next meeting in June.</p>	Insp SB
6	<p>Any other business</p> <p>None.</p>	
7	<p>Date and time of next meeting</p> <p>Chair thanked all for attending and for cross party work (all party representation) and confirmed the next meeting date of Wednesday 16th April at 5pm, refreshments available from 4.30pm at Halton Women’s Centre, Castlefields, Runcorn.</p>	