

REPORT TO: Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 20 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Health and Community

SUBJECT: Domestic Abuse

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To advise the Board on the progress of the Domestic Abuse Forum.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) The Board note the contents of this report and comment appropriately.
- 2) The Board make recommendations in respect of the future funding of the Service.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Forum has recently taken part in a successful national campaign, involving local companies and the general public. This was featured in local press and on radio.
- 3.2 Halton's Domestic Abuse Forum has now been split into two tiers – strategic and operational – in line with recommendations from the National Delivery Plan.
- 3.3 A Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference workshop was attended by key agencies and a further workshop was held on January 18th to prepare individuals for the first MARAC meeting for Halton in 2007. The workshop was attended by Police, HBC Social Services, Probation, local service providers and Supporting People.
- 3.4 Cheshire Police is currently working closely with the Forum to establish a programme focusing on reducing the number of repeat victims who report incidents of domestic abuse on a regular basis.
- 3.5 At the last Forum meeting of 2006 plans were revealed to co-ordinate a Domestic Abuse Conference in Halton to discuss further implementation of the strategy and involve more professionals in the borough. The Conference is now arranged for 28th March 2007.

4.0 PERFORMANCE

4.1 Recent achievements include: -

- **Halton's One Stop Shop Support Service for victims of domestic abuse is receiving, on average, one referral a day and is currently supporting 12 clients through the Domestic Violence Court in Halton. Since the helpline was extended to cover a 24 hour period, more self referrals have been noted and the helpline is now being used by hospital staff to refer patients to advice and support**
- **Successfully applied for a district judge to work in the Runcorn area on reducing a backlog of youth nuisance and domestic abuse related trials. The Specialist Domestic Violence Court in Halton will, in the new year, be remodeled to run more like Chester's court – which has seen an increase of guilty verdicts**
- **Refreshed the Halton Domestic Abuse Forum to split membership into two groups - strategic and operational**
- **Christmas awareness raising campaign of the 24 hour helpline using local radio station**
- **Expanded service user groups to cover both Widnes and Runcorn – Women's Advisory Groups will run every six weeks with a representative to join the Forum's Operational Group**
- **Roll out of the Freedom Programme to women in Halton aimed at empowering those who have been affected by domestic abuse**
- **Delivered Halton's Level One domestic violence training to a further 50 hospital staff in Halton and 125 Cheshire police staff**
- **New literature designed for promotional material to market the support service**
- **Database established to record multi-agency statistics on domestic abuse**
- **Involved local businesses and the general public in a national campaign aimed at raising awareness of services available in the area for sufferers of domestic abuse**

4.2 Data

A completed record of Halton Police statistics for the October – December 2006 for targets set in the annual LPSA2 are set out below.

	Oct06	Nov06	Dec06	Q3 total	LPSA Target	LPSA baseline	Performance this quarter
Total 'Domestic' and 'domestic violence' incidents	170	165	198	533	371	337	Exceeded
Sanction detections	25	16	31	72	71	67	Exceeded
Repeat Victims	12	12	8	32	39	41	Not met

The Relationships Centre has seen an increase of self-referrals to the Support Service, as well as referrals from other agencies in the borough.

In Quarter three, sanctuary scheme was provided to a further four women to enable them to stay in their own home and feel safe.

	Oct06	Nov06	Dec06	Q3 total	Target	baseline	Performance this quarter
Referrals to Support Service	48	47	18	113	46	39	exceeding
Number taking up sanctuary scheme	2	1	1	4	3	N/A	exceeding
Number taking up Court support service	3	2	3	8	8	N/A	on target

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The budget for Domestic Abuse for 2006/07 is:

- a) Total spend for NRF 06/07 = £90,000
- b) Total spend for SSCF (Single Pot) = £35,000

5.2 As Members can see all the funding is external. Whilst the Single Pot monies should continue, and these monies fund the Domestic Abuse Officer, the other streams end in 2008. Without these the levels of service will be severely curtailed.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 A Domestic Abuse Strategy is already approved.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Continuance of funding threatens progress in this area.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The Service is consistent and even handed in all regards and as such does not react differently to any particular group.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972