

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE PEOPLE

2 May 2017

SUBJECT: DOMESTIC ABUSE

Report of the Chief Constable

<p>PURPOSE OF THE REPORT</p> <p>1. This report outlines the Force's current position in relation to the policing of Domestic Abuse in West Yorkshire.</p>
<p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>2. That the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) uses this report to scrutinise Force performance in respect of Domestic Abuse.</p>
<p>POLICE AND CRIME PLAN</p> <p>3. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone, it can be financial, emotional, or physical. A quarter of respondents to our "Your Priorities, Your Plan" survey said that domestic abuse was a priority for them. The PCC will continue to work across all partner agencies including the Domestic Abuse Board to target offenders, challenge dangerous perceptions, raise awareness, encourage victims to come forward and provide the right support to them when they do.</p>
<p>KEY INFORMATION</p> <p>4. The PCC has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Established a Domestic Abuse Board in 2015 following a commissioned review to bring partners together to identify how, by working together, a Yorkshire wide approach can be taken. Work areas include a study into how domestic reviews homicide are undertaken by partners in West Yorkshire, and the commissioning of a perpetrator programme for low to medium risk cases. Membership of the Board is to be extended. This process began this month when the PCC recruited two Third Sector Advisors to provide additional expertise• A Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy is being finalised. A joint workshop will enable the development of a shared action plan to enable a coordinated response, act as a reference group for the Partnership Executive Group (PEG), explore opportunities for collaboration in delivery and share and learn good practice of working with victims and survivors. Partners have together submitted a joint bid to the Home Office's Violence Against Women and Girls Transformation Fund. Decisions on awards have been delayed until after the forthcoming general election.

- The PCC has funded additional Independent Domestic Abuse Adviser (IDVAs) in each district of West Yorkshire; commissioned an county-wide Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) Service; and has provided funding to specialist organisations including the Rape Crisis Centres, Survivors West Yorkshire and Keighley Domestic Violence Service.
- Along with NHS England the PCC has also co-commissioned an adult sexual assault referral centre (SARC) and a young people service.
- Euro 2016 Campaign – West Yorkshire Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire ran a dedicated Domestic Abuse Campaign in 2016 relating to football. The message was urging fans not to 'lose it all for football' after receiving a worryingly high volume of calls relating to domestic abuse incidents during major tournaments. WYP saw evidence of domestic abuse increase by a third and received an average of 110 calls per England game in previous Euro 2012 and the World Cup 2014.
- The PCC supported a campaign for 16 Days of Action against Domestic Abuse in November 2016. It focused on businesses and encouraged employers to help staff who may be victims of domestic abuse.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

5. Domestic Abuse Board includes representatives from the OPCC, West Yorkshire Police, Community Safety Partnerships from each district, local criminal justice board, Crown Prosecution Service, NHS England and Public Health England.

The PCC works closely with Community Safety Partnership play a key role in tackling the prevalence of domestic and sexual abuse and also in supporting victims and members of the local Criminal Justice Board who together aim towards achieving positive criminal justice outcomes.

A multi-agency planning workshop on Domestic and Sexual Abuse in partnership with West Yorkshire Police, other statutory and non-statutory services on the 7th June. The event will welcome up to 100 delegates and will include guest speakers and round table discussions.

Safer Communities Fund has awarded £100,611 of funding to 21 projects tackling Domestic Abuse since 2014.



**Chief Officer Team
Briefing for PCC**

Title: Domestic Abuse

CoT Sponsor: ACC Foster

Report Author: Supt Darren Minton

Summary

The purpose of this report outlines the work being undertaken by West Yorkshire Police to safeguard victims suffering domestic abuse and achieve the outcomes set out in the Police and Crime Plan.

Domestic abuse accounts for approximately 10% of all the incidents reported to West Yorkshire Police. Many victims have suffered for several years before reporting to police and the effects on children are significant.

On 29th December 2015, controlling and coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship became an offence under s76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015. It states that it is an offence for a person to repeatedly or continuously engage in behaviour that is controlling or coercive towards someone to whom they are 'personally connected.' This is a significant piece of legislation that the Police can now use where victims have suffered a range of abuse beyond physical injury.

The recent Peel Effectiveness Inspection 2016 focused heavily on domestic abuse. West Yorkshire Police were considered "good" in relation to our response to vulnerability. However, we are continually striving for further improvement to protect and support victims.

The Safeguarding Central Governance Unit regularly audit Districts in every aspect of domestic abuse and identifies areas for improvement. We have also used peer review with South Yorkshire and Lancashire to identify best practice.

REPORT DETAILS

Data taken from the Safeguarding Bulletin, between April 2016 – February 2017, West Yorkshire reported the following:

- 48,080 incidents of domestic abuse reported
- Victim repeat rate of 42%
- Suspect repeat rate of 27.1%
- Child present in 32.5% of cases
- 21,336 crimes recorded
- Crime arrest rate 59.7%
- Pre charge NFA rate of 16.3%
- Attrition rate of 23.2%
- 315 Controlling and coercive behaviour crimes recorded
- Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) used 88 times
- Clare's Law used 136 times (right to know, right to ask)

The above data does reveal an increasing trend in the number of incidents and crimes being reported and recorded. There are several factors that have influenced this which includes improved compliance of Crime Data Integrity which has resulted in more crime being recorded, an increased confidence of victims to report incidents to the Police knowing they will be treated professionally and with respect. This in turn can affect the increased repeat rate as victim feel more confident to report further incidents, however there is no one reason for the victim repeat rate. Also, if a positive intervention exists, for example, a restraining order imposed at court and a breach follows then this does add to the repeat rate. Therefore a positive measure is sometimes taken but adds to a negative overall repeat rate.

The Force have also expanded our 'Integrated Offender Manager Teams' to include and focus on offenders of domestic abuse. The teams work closely with offenders and victims in a preventative approach and are making positive interventions in repeat cases helping to reduce the risks involved.

The arrest rate of domestic abuse suspects nationally range from 20-80%, West Yorkshire Police are currently performing at the higher end of the scale. However, it is important to note that an arrest is not always a positive result for a victim and their wishes are considered in the investigation. There are also alternative methods to interview a person other than arrest and alternative outcomes other than charge, for example conditional caution where appropriate and each case is dealt with appropriately.

The attrition rate of court cases being discontinued is improving as a result of various factors. The Transforming Summary Justice (TSJ) courts add to a more efficient process. Safeguarding Teams across the Force deal with all high, medium and standard risk domestic cases providing consistency of service and follow up. The Domestic Abuse

District Patrol Unit are showing early success with keeping victims engaged and follow up Independent Domestic Advisor Agency (IDVA) services provide continued support.

ONGOING WORK AND DEVELOPMENTS

Domestic Abuse – A Whole systems Approach

This is led by Northumbria and funded by the Police Transformation Fund in collaboration with Durham, Cleveland, North Yorkshire and Humberside. Awaiting confirmation of 2 year funding.

The bid comprises of 4 themes;

- Effective working with the criminal justice system.
- Safeguarding with schools.
- Partnership work with Civil and Family Court.
- Multi-agency Victim Support and Offender Management.

One of the main areas of the project that has made an immediate impact since January 2017 is the introduction of domestic abuse cars jointly resourced by the Police and an IDVA. This has provided immediate support to the victim following an incident and has also created a better understanding of each other's roles. This has started in Bradford, Kirklees and Calderdale and will be extended to the other Districts once funding is confirmed. Over time, it will hopefully reduce both attrition and repeat victimisation. Raw figures include 82 shifts worked, 204 initial deployments and 130 victims accepting follow up support. A formal evaluation will take place in due course.

Operation Encompass

Informing schools every morning of any children present at a DA incident or living in a household where a DA incident has occurred the previous day. This allows schools to provide early support to the children. This is currently happening in Bradford, Leeds and Calderdale. Kirklees and Wakefield soon to be rolled out.

Controlling and Coercive Behaviour

Approximately 2,100 officers have been trained. 315 crimes/investigations have taken place. One investigation in Calderdale resulted in a 4 year sentence for the perpetrator, one of the largest sentences in the country to date (5 year maximum sentence).

Daily Risk Assessment Meetings (DRAM)

All Districts now assess domestic abuse incidents from the previous 24 hours with partners. Some areas have also retained a 2 or 4 weekly MARAC process. Particular attention is given to those cases where children have been involved or present and the necessary referrals and support provided.

Body Worn Video

Roll out programme in place with most areas using BWV which will support investigations and increase the ability for a victimless prosecution. There is already examples where charges have been agreed for a victimless prosecution where BWV was key to the evidence.

Choices Perpetrator Programme

In its second year of a two year PCC funded pilot providing the ability of a perpetrator programme as a positive outcome for standard risk cases of domestic abuse. A recent review provided positive indicators, showing 80% compliance and of those who completed the course, 78% did not reoffend in the specific time period reviewed.

Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs)

All hearings for DVPOs will now be heard at Leeds Magistrates Court providing a consistent approach from a court perspective. During a peer review with Lancashire, the Safeguarding Governance Unit identified the benefits of a dedicated team to bring consistency and professionalism to the Police process. A bid has been submitted via the Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) funding as part of a wider PCC bid. If this is unsuccessful consideration will be given as to how to achieve this.

Deep Dive

The DA deep dive exercise was commissioned by the Cross CJS Victim and Witness Board to ensure the capacity and capability of the CJS to respond effectively to the projected rise in DA cases and improve outcomes. This is an ongoing project in the Bradford area working closely with CPS and court services to improve delivery.

Domestic Abuse Internal Campaign

Launched in November 2016 and provides a confidential reporting mechanism for officers and staff to report a crime or simply seek support. For extra confidentiality, there is an agreement that North Yorkshire or South Yorkshire could investigate if the victim wishes. A policy exists alongside the internal media campaign.

Audits

The Safeguarding Central Governance Unit regularly audit District performance in relation to domestic abuse and identify areas for improvement in an audit report. From June 2017, a new approach will be taken whereby District panel meetings are held with officers and their supervision to discuss a finalised case and identify any lessons that can be learnt.

STRATEGIC RISK IMPLICATIONS

- The number of domestic incidents is increasing yet the crime arrest rate is decreasing, however, West Yorkshire arrest rate is 59.7% but nationally this ranges from 20%-80%, partly due to inconsistent recording practice. Some of the issues also relate to use of voluntary attendance rather than arrest, a victim led approach and delayed response times losing the initial opportunity to arrest. The number of investigations been taken to CPS for consideration is decreasing. West Yorkshire along with Forces nationally are working with Strategic lead, DCC Rolfe to see the reasons for these trends. A workshop was held in February as part of a regional leads meeting and work is ongoing.
- Controlling and Coercive Behaviour legislation is being used but there is still scope for further use as officers become used to the legislation and the evidence required for conviction.
- IDVAs are a key component in a domestic abuse case to support the victims from the initial incident and throughout the court process. The reduction of funding by the Government is a risk as the IDVA workloads are heavy and already cannot support every case.
- The DASH risk assessment is used to measure the degree of threat and risk present within a domestic incident and is currently being reviewed by the College of Policing. The Force is awaiting the revision which will include enhanced assessment of controlling and coercive behaviour, this will ensure the overall risk is better understood and assessed using a more holistic overview as abuse is not always physical. There is no current timescale for their review, but the Force look forward to this evolution in understanding domestic abuse risk which will provide clarity for officers attending domestic incidents.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The Force is committed and will continue to work with our Partners in helping to reach those victims in communities who may struggle to approach the Police directly to report abuse. It is vital that through increased and effective partnership working that all agencies offer the appropriate prevention and proactive initiatives and support to all individuals, across all strands, most notably age, gender, race, religion, disability and sexual orientation.