

Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	5 th July 2018
Officer	Helen Coombes - Transformation Lead for Adult & Community Services Forward Together Programme
Subject of Report	Domestic Abuse - Update
Executive Summary	<p>The Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee acts as the County Council's Crime & Disorder Committee and is responsible for scrutinising the actions taken by partners in relation to their crime and disorder functions.</p> <p>Partners produce a three-year Community Safety Plan that sets out their priorities and how, in broad terms, they will address them. Tackling domestic abuse is one of partners' community safety priorities.</p> <p>Members of the Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee have taken a particular interest in work to tackle domestic abuse. In October 2017, committee members held an inquiry day to better understand the issues associated with domestic abuse and partners' work to address them.</p> <p>The day produced a number of findings that have been summarised and are set out in this report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) Information sharing(ii) Training and awareness raising(iii) Co-location of services(iv) Balanced provision(v) Risk assessment(vi) Whole family approach. <p>An update on the progress being made against them is provided.</p>

<p>Impact Assessment:</p>	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment:</p> <p>An Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the process of revising the 2017-2020 Community Safety Plan.</p> <hr/> <p>Use of Evidence:</p> <p>The County Council's and its partners' work to address community safety issues, including domestic abuse, is informed by an annual needs assessment called a Partnership Strategic Assessment (PSA).</p> <p>The PSA is complimented with further research and analytical work that is undertaken throughout the year.</p> <p>Members of the Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee held a domestic abuse inquiry day in October 2017. The aim of the day was to better understand the issues associated with domestic abuse and the work being undertaken by partners to address them.</p> <hr/> <p>Budget:</p> <p>None.</p> <hr/> <p>Risk Assessment:</p> <p>Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the County Council's approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as:</p> <p>Current Risk: LOW Residual Risk LOW</p> <hr/> <p>Outcomes:</p> <p>The Committee scrutinises partners' work to tackle community safety issues and by doing so helps ensure it is focused on achieving good outcomes.</p> <hr/> <p>Other Implications:</p> <p>None.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>To review and comment on community safety work, specifically in relation to domestic abuse and the progress being made against the key findings from the domestic abuse inquiry day.</p>
<p>Reason for Recommendation</p>	<p>To support the scrutiny of partners' work in relation to their crime and disorder functions, specifically tackling domestic abuse.</p>

Appendices	None.
Background Papers	<p>Dorset Community Safety Plan 2017-2020 –</p> <p>https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/your-community/community-safety/community-safety-pdfs/community-safety-partnership-plan-2017-to-2020.pdf</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Inquiry Day – Report to the Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 30th Jan 2018</p> <p>Pan-Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy – A copy of the strategy can be found here.</p>
Officer Contact	<p>Name: Ian Grant, Programme Co-ordinator Tel: 01305 228516 Email: i.grant@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p> <p>Name: Andy Frost, Community Safety Team Manager Tel: 01305 224331 Email: a.frost@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The report is provided so that the Committee can scrutinise community safety work, particularly in relation to domestic abuse and receive an update on progress since the Inquiry Day on domestic abuse in Dorset held on 30 January 2018.

2. Community Safety

- 2.1 The Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee acts as the County Council's Crime & Disorder Committee and is responsible for scrutinising the actions taken by partners in relation to their crime and disorder functions.
- 2.2 Partners, including the County Council, work together to tackle community safety issues through the Dorset Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The CSP produces a three-year Community Safety Plan that sets out their priorities and how, in broad terms, they will address them.
- 2.3 The current Community Safety Plan runs from 2017 to 2020 and includes the following priorities:

- Domestic abuse related violent crime
- Serious sexual offences
- Anti-social behaviour

- 2.4 Community Safety Plans are revised annually. Revisions must be informed by partners' annual Partnership Strategic Assessment (PSA).
- 2.5 The Dorset CSP is in the process of revising its current Community Safety Plan. The latest PSA has been completed and the priorities for the current year have been agreed. The priorities include tackling domestic abuse.

3. Domestic Abuse

- 3.1 The Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee has taken particular interest in the work being undertaken by the County Council and its partners to tackle domestic abuse.
- 3.2 In October 2017 the Committee held an inquiry day into domestic abuse in Dorset. The objectives of the day were to:
 - a) Gain insight into the experience of those who use services
 - b) Hear views and receive feedback from providers and other stakeholders
 - c) Hear from workers on the front line
 - d) Understand how partners are working together to tackle domestic abuse
 - e) Look at the overall strategy for addressing domestic abuse in Dorset
 - f) Identify how members can contribute to the quality of support provided to those experiencing domestic abuse across Dorset.
- 3.3 Findings from the day were presented to the committee on the 30th January 2018.
- 3.4 Committee members are also aware of the pan-Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy that sets out partners' priorities for tackling domestic abuse.
- 3.5 Below is a summary of the findings from the domestic abuse inquiry day and information on how issues have been progressed. The update links progress and issues back to partners' Domestic Abuse Strategy.

4. Update on Findings from the Inquiry Day

- 4.1 Finding: Information Sharing
- 4.2 An audit commissioned by the Dorset CSP concluded that information sharing across agencies and via multi-agency arrangements is 'good' when it comes to domestic abuse.
- 4.3 The Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Information Sharing Protocol is being reviewed to ensure processes for sharing information in cases of domestic abuse are up to date and comply with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
- 4.4 Finding: Training and awareness raising (including better sign-posting of services)
- 4.5 A work programme for addressing the training objectives set out in the pan Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy is underway and is being coordinated by representatives from the Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth CSPs and both safeguarding Training and Workforce Development Boards.
- 4.6 Significant progress has also been made in the last financial year to share lessons coming out of Domestic Homicide Reviews, Serious Case Reviews and Safeguarding

Adult Reviews. This has ensured a consistent approach when disseminating learning across agencies' workforces.

4.7 Alongside this work improvements have been made to the way information on support services available in Dorset are promoted, examples include;

- Developing a pan Dorset Domestic Abuse Communications Plan;
- Working with GPs to improve their skills to recognise domestic abuse and signposting to appropriate services;
- Raising awareness of the Isolated Communities Engagement Project (ICEP) to help break down the barriers to some of our most isolated communities;
- Updating the Dorset For You Domestic Abuse directory.

4.8 Finding: Co-location of services

4.9 Partner agencies from across Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole have come together to create the Children's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) which includes co-location of the high risk domestic abuse service 'Maple Project'.

4.10 Senior officers from across partner agencies are now exploring options to align adult safeguarding to a similar model.

4.11 Finding: Balanced provision

4.12 Across Dorset there is a range of provision for people who have been affected by domestic abuse. However, it is important that the County Council and its partners understand whether their collective offer is meeting people's needs and having an impact.

4.13 In response to this, a work programme to look at domestic abuse as a whole systems approach is underway and is being coordinated by the pan Dorset Domestic Abuse Steering Group.

4.14 Whilst this work will provide a picture of where we are now, it will also set out a vision for the future that will likely require culture change to the way services are provided and commissioned.

4.15 At a national level, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) are currently reviewing their approach to funding domestic abuse services.

4.16 The County Council was invited to be one of ten case studies from across the UK to support the MHCLG understand critical issues in the provision of domestic abuse services and to illustrate the experiences in Dorset.

4.17 Finding: Risk Assessment

4.18 Recent work undertaken by the Dorset CSP to audit partners use of risk assessments in cases of domestic abuse concluded there was evidence of good practice but also areas for improvement.

4.19 Initial work has been undertaken to address many of the issues highlighted and further work, aimed at reviewing and revising the risk assessment tools and processes used in Dorset, is scheduled to take place imminently.

4.20 Improvements have also been made to the pan Dorset MARAC Steering Group Quality Assurance processes which now include monitoring agencies use of the DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour-Based-Violence) risk checklist.

4.21 Finding: Whole family approach

4.22 The Adults and Children's Safeguarding Boards and the CSPs in Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole have made good progress in championing the whole family approach.

4.23 There is a separate item on today's agenda that covers this work in more detail.

5. Conclusion

5.1 This report has provided an update on the latest position so that the Committee can scrutinise this in its role as the County Council's Crime and Disorder Committee.

Helen Coombes

Transformation Lead for Adult & Community Services Forward Together Programme

June 2018