

## Questions Submitted by Councillors

### Question 1 – Submitted by Councillor Julie Robinson

With anti-social behaviour, why are the Police not doing anything, residents have to report this online, it's quite a lengthy form, but not everyone is tech minded, and the only response is a generated email saying thank you for submitting the form several weeks later, there is no face to face follow up, even though at times camera footage of the incident is submitted, why is this?

Businesses and other partners who we work with are also experiencing long delays in their emails being answered from the police, sometimes it can be well over a month, why?

Youths causing anti-social behaviour by breaking windows, kicking down fences, riding motor bikes over the football pitch, they know that they can get away with doing things like this, and residents are also very aware that nothing will be done. It's a vicious circle, youths will continue to cause trouble and residents have given up on reporting things as nobody ever gets back to them and this can't be allowed to continue, why should people have to put up with their property being damaged and no follow up or courtesy visit from the Police. My residents are fed up to the back teeth with this lack of care and support from the Police and want to know what exactly is going to be done to rectify things and restoring their faith in our Police.

### Question 2 – Submitted by Councillor Sara Armstrong

I'd like to raise these concerns about services and issues in relation to violence against women and girls, on behalf of residents.

**Resident 1** - Someone I know lost her home with her 2 children. She was put up in hotels then offered a place in a female only hotel as semi-permanent until a council property came up. It was strictly female only. They were all evicted as the owner of the property was not making the money they thought they would. Can we confirm that the women evicted from the DV shelter are NOT the same women that have been placed in hotel accommodation and are in fact placed in secure accommodation.

**Resident 2** - The main challenges I've seen with residents are the police not having power to prosecute and therefore protect victims in advance of severe and or prolonged abuse. It is very difficult as well for vulnerable people to escape where there is coercive control. The psychological nature of victims who are traumatised also means they are not usually good at admin or organising things especially associated to their abuse and must keep re living it, as they have to talk about it more than once. This seems to be quite a requirement to navigating the systems and

finding the right help. Typically, a victim won't seek therapy or support at first because of trauma avoidance and other trauma associated symptoms like memory loss and brain fog. And then once ready, the route to access seems not very clear at all.

I would personally like to echo this statement and have my own questions from lived experience. Operation Maple provides a vital lifeline for victims of domestic violence. Independent officers can provide information and support when it is needed, on the progress of cases because they are based within the police and can access police data. Their support in helping a victim navigate the legal process and proceed with their case - not dropping charges is invaluable. I understand that Maple is being dismantled - please can you confirm if this is the case and in the absence of this vital team, how risks to victims will be minimised.

### **Bobby Van - target hardening**

I understand that this vital service to protect victims of domestic violence and crime in their own home has been withdrawn. This service provided victims of crime with practical measures to stay safe and feel secure such as changing locks, creating safe rooms and specialist advice on crime prevention. In the absence of the Bobby Van how will victims of domestic violence now be safe and feel secure to remain in their homes and is victim support still available as it's vital.

What training is provided to officers and the wider networks of professionals who support victims who have experienced coercive control? Of the recorded crimes of coercive control for Dorset how many results in actual charges and prosecutions? Stalking has devastating effects on victims and families. What progress is being made to encourage victims to report, on the number of charges made and prosecutions? What safeguards are in place for victims - most of whom are women?

Technology assisted domestic abuse seems to be an unrecognised safeguarding issue, intrinsically linked to coercive control that can continue long after an intimate partner relationship has ended. What training is being provided to officers and other professionals to enable them to spot it, keep up to date with new techniques used by perpetrators to control victims even in their absence, understand the full impact on victims and safeguard them?