

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission

Future Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Services in Leicester

Date of Commission meeting: 30th October 2019

Lead Director: John Leach

Useful Information:

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Daxa Pancholi, Head of Community Safety and Protection
- Author contact details: 0116 454 0203
- Date of meeting: 30th October 2019

1. Summary

- 1.1 The City Council is currently a partner in (and manages) a jointly commissioned Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse (DSVA) service for Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland, and individually commissions a further three services for Leicester only. The jointly commissioned service is the main portal to all domestic and sexual violence and abuse services across the sub-region. These services are due to end on 31st March 2021.
- 1.2 The partners that currently fund the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland contract have agreed to consider jointly commissioning again and in 2018 collectively reviewed existing individually and jointly commissioned services. This included holding a series of stakeholder events. From this, a proposed model emerged which forms the basis of the public consultation. The consultation on the proposed model for future services for April 2021 and beyond opened on the 11th September and runs until 24th November 2019.
- 1.3 Scrutiny is asked to provide comment on the proposals and support further engagement with the consultation exercise.

2. Recommendation(s) to scrutiny

The Scrutiny Commission is recommended to:

1. Consider the proposed model and how it might impact the local community.
2. Inform and encourage people to complete the consultation, using the following ways;
 - People can find out more about engagement events or raise queries through contacting DSVTeam@leicester.gov.uk, telephone 0116 454 0254 or
 - Complete the survey which can be accessed via the following link and closes on 24th November <https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/>

3. Supporting Information

- 3.1 Recorded crime related to domestic abuse **increased by 20%** between 2016-17 and 2017-18 in Leicester. Sexual violence related crime **increased by 26%** in the same period. There has been year on year increases over the last

three years. This is against a background of continued under-reporting. The latest crime survey for England and Wales indicated that only a third of people who experience domestic abuse contact an official agency about that experience: the fact that these are largely **hidden issues** remains a significant obstacle to reducing them.

3.2 Based on the Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) prevalence data (based on self-completion surveys carried out by those aged 16-54), 58,435 men and women will experience domestic abuse and 33,577 men and women will have experience sexual violence; from age of 16 (based on population figures). In Leicester, around a third of police reported sexual violence takes place within the definition of domestic abuse.

3.3 In Leicester (2017-18) 2313 referrals were made into the specialist domestic and sexual violence and abuse services currently commissioned by the city council. This included 1210 referrals into the support and information service, 686 referrals for safe housing, 288 families for support of 420 children, and 129 perpetrators of domestic violence.

3.4 The current four Leicester City Council DSVAs (all delivered by UAVA) started on 1/12/15, these are:

- Children, young people and families service (CYPFS) for sexual and domestic violence. This incorporates practical and emotional support and is for children and young people of any age.
- Safe Home Service, which is for those who do not have safe housing due to sexual or domestic violence. This service can secure homes where appropriate, give housing advice and support and provide emergency supported accommodation (refuge provision).
- Domestic Violence Perpetrator Interventions service. This is for men and women and is aimed at those who want to change their behaviour (they have not been ordered by a court to do so). This includes partner/ ex-partner support and a variety of individual and group work programmes.
- Information and Support Service. This includes helpline, individual and group support across all levels of risk (of harm) and need and includes counselling, recovery, crisis and advocacy work. This is the contract which is Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland wide and is a joint commission, with a joint commissioning and assurance board and a partnership agreement to govern arrangements (together with a pooled fund).

3.5 The service model currently in place provides a hub approach; a single point of access across Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland. There are various access routes: helpline, business line, textphone, email or web enquiry.

3.6 The partners that currently fund the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland contract have agreed to consider jointly commissioning again and in 2018 collectively reviewed existing individually and jointly commissioned services.

- 3.7 The proposed model has considered the views of local stakeholders, lessons learnt from current commissions across the partnership, national expectations and the local needs assessment.
- 3.8 The proposed services focus on how we might improve ease of access, reduce delay and make support simpler, within the funds available. We have looked at where the pressures and successes are in the current model and what gets in the way of people becoming safer.
- 3.9 The proposed model continues a commitment to provide services to adults and children affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence. It retains a focus on domestic abuse perpetrators as those responsible for abuse and offers an opportunity for change outside of the criminal justice system. It seeks to broaden the range of accommodation options currently provided for people not safe in their own homes due to domestic abuse and sexual violence, thereby reducing the amount of people who are not able to secure safe accommodation.
- 3.10 The City Council spend on DSVA contracts is approximately £812,519 per annum. This is higher than the base budget and was made possible through the additional funds available in earlier years; from the Home Office, Troubled Families Programme and Homelessness Grant funding streams. None of these are currently received into the local authority for domestic and sexual violence services.

4. Financial, legal and other implications

4.1 Financial implications

The core revenue budget (excluding public health) for commissioning of the services outlined in the report is £693,700. Our current commitment for contracts through UAVA is £812,519 p.a., with the necessary additional funding having been secured from the Safer Leicester Partnership and City Council Public Health budgets.

Colin Sharpe, Deputy Director of Finance tel: 0116 454 4081

4.2 Legal implications

Following consultation on the proposed model, the product of that consultation must be taken into account in the final decision and the responses need to be fed into the decision making process.

Further legal and procurement advice should be sought as appropriate and in particular when the services come to an end in March 2021.

Seema Patel (Commercial), tel: 0116 454 1406

4.3 Climate Change implications

There are no significant climate change implications associated with this report.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, tel: 0116 454 2284

4.4 Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

At the time of the previous report in October 2018, it was recommended that an equalities impact assessment be commenced to help inform the options available in terms of service re-design by actively considering how the general aims of the PSED can be met and to aid in identifying potential or actual disproportionate negative impacts on people with a particular protected characteristic/s, in order that mitigating actions can put into place to reduce or remove that impact.

An equality impact assessment is being carried out and will be updated with the findings of the public consultation currently underway, which should lead to a final model being agreed. The equality impact assessment will be updated to reflect these outcomes and highlight any issues as appropriate.

The re-design of services will have an impact on people from across all protected characteristics but may particularly be relevant to the protected characteristic of sex, as women and girls are disproportionately affected by domestic and sexual violence and other groups that may have specific needs, for example women from BME backgrounds and those with a mental health condition. The main headings of the strategic framework should support positive equalities outcomes, however there is not sufficient detail in the report covering the objectives which sit underneath the main headings to provide further comment on the strategic framework.

In terms of the recommendation to confirm the commissioning budget for future domestic and sexual violence and abuse provision as £769,000 per annum - although there are no direct equalities issues arising from this, it was identified in the last report (October 2018) that the protection of specialist black and ethnic minority provision would be challenging to add to the service model if the existing budget was continued. This should be considered as part of the decision and the equalities impact assessment to ensure that any disproportionate negative impacts are mitigated.

The recommendation that the executive support the use of the contract extension on all existing domestic and sexual violence and abuse contracts until 31st March 2021, and the associated partnership agreement does not have any direct equalities implications, however the current service should continue to be monitored to ensure that equalities practise is consistent with the expectations of the authority and any issues should be responded to in order to ensure that we continue to meet our statutory duties – the PSED is an on-going duty and cannot be delegated.

Hannah Watkins, Equalities Manager tel: 0116 454 5811

4.5 Other Implications

Procurement

All procurement implications will be considered in line with Leicester City Council policy and procedures.

Hussian Dakri, Procurement Manager, tel: 0116 454 0685

5. Background information and other papers:

- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Strategic Framework and Vision for Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse
- Local/Sub-Regional DSVA Governance Infrastructure Diagram 2019
- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment 2017 (and subsequent refresh)
- Leicester Needs Assessment Refresh Summary 2018-19

6. Summary of appendices:

Appendix B1 – Presentation

7. Is this a private report?

No.