

# Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission

## Domestic and Sexual Violence & Abuse

July 2020

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Leicester  
City Council

# Domestic and Sexual Violence & Abuse Team

Responsible for;

- Co-ordinating Council Efforts
- Working with Partners – ensure a citywide approach.
- Commission Services – according to need.

# Local Provision

UAVA Helpline (LLR)  
**0808 80 200 28**

Hope Project  
(Substance & Mental  
Health)

City Based Services  
(Accommodation/ Families/  
Perpetrator)

Many active organisations committed to a partnership  
response

# How the Covid-19 situation might impact

- Increased opportunities to control
- Reduced opportunities to disclose or be seen
- Increased barriers to reporting
- Trigger point(s) for those who use abuse to step to next level abuse

# What has the Council done to mitigate the risk?

- Reassurance messages that services are available, people can flee
- Letters to schools with positive ideas and resources
- Weekly updates from commissioned (and internal) services to track impact
- Revised our employee policy
- Joined national meetings
- Prioritised domestic abuse (homelessness)
- Developed new resources
- Weekly partnership meetings
- Increased communication activity
- 3 months pause on commissioning
- Offered extension on existing contracts for a further year, relaxing targets
- Asked providers what they need
- Revisited key pathways and policy

# Services adapting to meet need

- Securing grant funding
- Web chat function
- Online groups
- Additional properties
- Additional telephone lines
- Brought in additional emotional support
- Online counselling



- ## What has our experience been to date?
- Increased anxiety
  - Reliving previous trauma
  - Safety concerns in engaging with victims online and over the phone
  - Increased emotional support needed
  - Friends and family concerned
  - Very restricted activity for victims
  - Significant increase starting to come in relation to safe housing enquiries
  - Challenging position for staff
  - Suspension of training programme



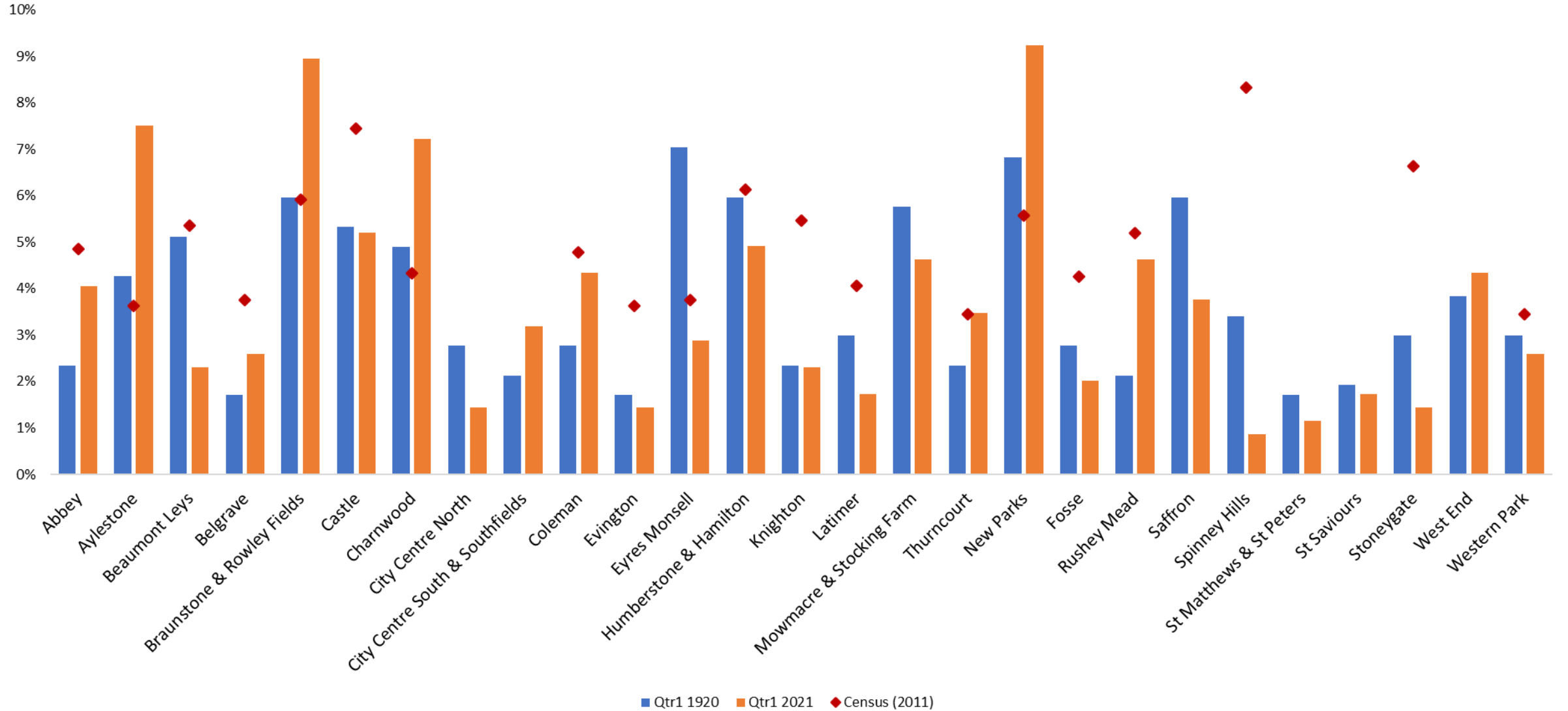
# Changing Picture

- Increasing demand
- Biggest (proportional) increases to date have been in housing management and to the commissioned safe home service
- Some fluctuation – overall helpline down on last year
- Increasing proportion of CSC&EH contacts related to domestic abuse
- Might be reaching a different population



# UAVA Data - Leicester Ward Data – Comparisons Q1 2019 and 2020

Percentage of referrals to UAVA - Apr-Jun 19 compared with Apr-Jun 20



# National funding for local charities

No direct funding to local authorities for DSVA but have secured:

- £182,518 MHCLG (accommodation based services) funding to local charities
- £444,997 Ministry of Justice funding through Police and Crime Commissioner

**ALL FOR SPEND UP TO 31<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER**

- Awards for All, Community Development Fund, National Lottery, Henry Smith Charitable Trust

# Risks

- Ability to respond to a further increase or surge
- Those with no recourse to public funds and/or higher levels of mental ill health numbers reported to be increasing
- Court backlog
- Short term national funding commitment
- Impact of chronic fear
- Link to the national and sub-regional picture – if no longer safe in Leicester....

# Domestic Abuse Bill

In line with the documents released in December 2016, the 2020 Act aims to:

- Protect and support victims
- Transform the justice process
- Improve performance
- Promote awareness

Factsheets are available:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets>

# Domestic Abuse Bill

- Provide for a **statutory definition** of domestic abuse;
- Establish the office of **Domestic Abuse Commissioner**
- Place a duty on tier one local authorities in England to **provide support to domestic abuse victims and their children in safe accommodation**

# CLOSE

UAVA helpline 0808 80 200 28

[Uava.org.uk](http://Uava.org.uk)

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Questions or comment?