

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LEICESTERSHIRE

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Report of	OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
Subject	INTERVENTIONS ADDRESSING VIOLENCE IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN LINKED TO DOMESTIC ABUSE
Date	THURSDAY 24 JUNE 2021 – 1:00 p.m.
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Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the panel of existing and planned interventions around violence in the public domain linked to domestic abuse provision across Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR).

Recommendation

2. The Panel is asked to note the contents of this report.

Background

3. Domestic Abuse is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:
 - Psychological
 - Physical
 - Sexual
 - Financial
 - Emotional
4. Rolling year data to 4th October 2020 shows that 11,993 domestic abuse crimes and 5014 domestic abuse incidents were reported to the police. This was a 5% and 18% increase on the prior 12 months respectively which is expected to have been driven by national/local lockdowns for Covid-19.

5. Domestic abuse (DA), as is widely known, is a gendered issue predominantly impacting upon women and girls. Locally, 75% of DA related crime victims in police recorded data are female.
6. Domestic abuse largely takes place within private dwellings. Only 5.5% is recorded by the police (latest available rolling year data) as occurring in a “public/open place” with a further 1.4% occurring in locations that could also be construed as such.
7. Interventions exist to tackle domestic abuse but these are not focussed on that happening within the public domain given the above statistics.
8. Interventions do exist to tackle violence more generally in the public domain which locally our Violence Reduction Network (VRN) lead on. In particular, the interventions seeking to embolden bystander intervention have relevance to domestic abuse.
9. With domestic abuse mainly impacting upon women and girls it is worth highlighting to Panel the bid currently being developed for the Home Office’s Safer Streets 3 fund which is targeted at tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG) in public spaces.

Domestic Abuse Interventions

10. A whole suite of services exist to support victims of domestic abuse but the term “interventions” has been taken to imply preventing perpetrators from committing such crimes. A separate paper on support available to victims can be prepared for Panel should they so wish.
11. There are three tiers of domestic abuse perpetrator interventions across LLR.
12. The first is the Conditional Cautions And Relationship Abuse (CARA) project which is an out of court disposal (issued by the police) targeted at first time/lower level perpetrators designed to help perpetrators realise that their behaviour is not okay and needs to change. This takes the form of 2 group sessions and is delivered by the Hampton Trust. It includes liaison with, and support of, the victim to ensure that the intervention does not have negative consequences for them. This intervention is fully funded by the PCC and the latest monitoring return showed 78% of victims seeing a positive behaviour change in their partner/ex-partner.
13. The second is a longer term behaviour change group programme taking place over a number of months which perpetrators voluntarily engage with and helps them to change their behaviour. This intervention likewise engages with/supports the victim and has been shown to reduce abuse in 75% of cases. This intervention is delivered by the local specialist organisation FreeVA under the guise of the Jenkins Centre. This intervention is jointly funded by the PCC, Probation, Clinical Commissioning Groups and local authority partners (first and second tiers). However, only the Leicester City Council investment is long term with the rest invested as a pilot project with match funding from the Home Office. A sustainable funding approach is still required for Leicestershire and Rutland provision.
14. The third is a mandatory programme also seeking to change their behaviour but delivered by probation as part of an offender’s license conditions or a requirement of a Community or Suspended Sentence Order. This is again a group programme and engages with the victim to ensure that the intervention does not have negative consequences for them. This is funded by the Ministry of Justice.

Bystander interventions

15. The VRN has invested in a secondary schools programme, Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP). This is a peer-led programme which provides young people with a space to discuss issues relating to all types of violence and a bystander toolkit which empowers them to challenge the types of comments and behaviours which can, over time, lead to violence in and outside of intimate relationships. MVP is suitable for delivery in any setting where there are groups of young people. For example, the VRN will be working with sports and youth clubs to implement the MVP curriculum within existing activity.
16. This year's VRN campaign 'Make a Stand Against Violence' focuses primarily on public place violence amongst young people. It again draws on a bystander methodology and, using positive psychology and peer influence, seeks to promote the social norms we wish to see. The campaign has been designed in a way which means it is transferable to other forms of violence and can be cascaded digitally via social media and used by a range of organisations.
17. Bystander campaigns specifically around domestic abuse do exist locally ('Wrong' / 'When is it time to act') but these are encouraging a call to action where people have a suspicion of something not being quite right rather than encouraging a response when witnessing an overt violent act of abuse in the public domain.

Safer Streets 3 (VAWG)

18. In the wake of Sarah Everards death, the government announced a further round of the Safer Streets fund. The bidding opportunity was formally launched on 3rd June 2021 and £25m is available nationally to be spent on public spaces where women and girls are, or feel, unsafe. The PCC and his team are already working with partners to pull together a bid focussed around making parks safer for women and girls and we are hopeful that this will benefit a number of parks across the force area.
19. The bid for up to £550,000 is due 15th July 2021 with delivery expected from August 2021 up until 31st March 2022. A further update on this can be provided to Panel in the event that we are successful in securing the funding from the Home Office.

Implications

Financial: None

Legal: None.

Equality Impact Assessment: None.

Risks and Impact: None identified.

Link to Police and Crime Plan: Victims, Vulnerability and Prevention

List of Appendices

None

Persons to Contact

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