

Title: Progress report on the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy for Torbay 2018-2022

Wards Affected: All

To: Health and Wellbeing Board **On:** 14 March 2019

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Health and Wellbeing Board on progress of the implementation of the 2018-22 Torbay Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy and Action Plan.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) Strategy was formalised in April 2018. The Strategy is now incorporated into Council policy framework ensuring that it is a key strategic document to be delivered.
- 2.2 The Strategy highlights that DASV is a priority across a range of local Boards, including: Health and Wellbeing, Community Safety Partnership, Torbay Safeguarding Children Board and Adult Safeguarding Board.
- 2.3 The Strategy sets out a multi-agency approach to prevention, protection of children, provision of support and protection and justice. This was developed following a mapping exercise conducted across statutory agencies, commissioned services, voluntary organisations and those who use services.

3. Progress to date

3.1 Enhanced provision through obtaining additional funding

- 3.1.1 Work is under way to strengthen partnership working and support the delivery of our DASV Strategy. Torbay has been successful in securing a variety of funding bids to enhance local provision, often in collaboration with colleagues from across the peninsular which is strengthening links beyond our border.
- 3.1.2 Torbay has been successful in a Peninsula wide funding bid to MHCLG Domestic Abuse Fund. The bid was led by Cornwall, with Torbay, Devon, Plymouth and all our domestic abuse providers, and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPPC) contributing to the bid and listed as partners.

3.1.3 This will be spent across the Peninsula from 2108 to 20 to provide the following:

- Increased bed capacity with specialist support where need is identified as highest and increased support in current provision to support women and children with complex needs.
- Roll out of a workforce development programme across the Peninsula to upskill the workforce to better support those with complex needs.
- System change to share and embed best practice to respond to complexity and ensure consistent and sustainable domestic abuse services are delivered across the Peninsula and best use is made of the provision we have.
- In Torbay a new post of a Complex Needs Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) will be employed by the current commissioned service, providing additional IDVA capacity, but working in close partnership with the Sexual Offence and Domestic Abuse Investigation Team (SODAIT), rough sleepers services and the Council's Vulnerability team. This role will work intensively and predominantly with a cohort of rough sleeping women in Torbay who experience DASV and also present with poor mental ill health and alcohol and/or substance misuse, facilitating access to crisis accommodation and engagement with treatment and recovery services, DWP and housing options.
- Torbay will also benefit from the workforce development programme.

3.1.4 Home Office Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) work during 2018-20 in conjunction with Devon to embed routine, clinical and sensitive enquiry into a broad range of settings within GP surgeries known as the IRIS Project. The funding will also be used to explore ways of working with male perpetration. Torbay has currently three GP Practices signed up with a further three interested in taking part. There is recognition that the introduction of the VAWG funding will increase reporting of DASV, but with this increase in confidence to report, there will be an increase in demand for services in Torbay.

3.1.5 The Strategy has identified that male perpetration programmes and initiatives need to improve and will be one of the key areas of the action plan will concentrate on. One particular area will be improving access to perpetrator programme and improving ways of identifying and supporting perpetrators to change their behaviours. Funding from our VAWG project has been allocated to explore options on how this can be done.

3.1.6 Work with DCLG to set establish up 4 specialist units of supported accommodation for women with multiple vulnerabilities was granted for one year 2018 ends April 2019 to complete the following:

- To provide specialist, trauma informed support to homeless and socially isolated victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence, experiencing multiple vulnerabilities and barriers to services.
- To reduce instances of homelessness and street homelessness amongst women with multiple needs who have experienced domestic abuse and sexual violence.
- To prevent repeat victimisation from domestic abuse and sexual violence.
- To provide a safe environment to enable victims to address their needs and realise their aspirations, including linking to education, training and employment.
- To provide additional information and training resources to staff and volunteers across statutory and voluntary organisations.
- To promote awareness of the issues and help and support available.

3.1.7 The Complex Needs IDVA being appointed as a result of the MHCLG funding will enable some of this good work to be continued.

3.2 Recommission Programme

3.2.1 DASV services are due to be recommissioned for 2019. This is on track and will be incorporated into the proposed Alliance Framework contract model of delivery across complex needs services. This provides alternative options for delivery and risk share along with the potential for innovative working practices. To support this proposal, Against Violence and Abuse (AVA) were commissioned to produce an options appraisal which has been completed and will inform commissioning process.

3.3 Operational Development

3.3.2 Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO) provisions operating in Devon and Cornwall now have dedicated staff to implement orders and notices. Under the scheme the police and magistrates can protect a victim when they are at their most vulnerable, in the immediate aftermath of an attack, by preventing the perpetrator from contacting the victim or returning to their home for up to 28 days. This helps victims who may otherwise have had to flee their home and gives them the space and time to access the support they need and to consider their options.

3.3.3 Previously, there had been a gap in protection for victims of domestic abuse due to either the Police being unable to charge the perpetrator due to lack of evidence (meaning that the protection available to a victim through strict bail conditions could not be applied) or the process for granting longer-term injunctions taking several days or weeks to apply for. DVPOs are designed to bridge this gap by empowering the Police and magistrates to issue an immediate order to ban the perpetrator from returning home or making contact with the victim for up to 28 days.

3.3.4 The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Coordinator post has proven to be essential for close partnership working. Key achievements facilitated by the Domestic Abuse Sexual Violence coordinator include:

- Torbay Council was awarded the first White Ribbon accreditation in the south west in May 2018. White Ribbon is an international campaign led by men to raise awareness of male violence against women and girls. The accreditation was followed up by a series of local events and community engagements with a two year implementation plan on how men will engage with the community to raise awareness. Torbay's White Ribbon on Tour campaign has gained national recognition and was featured in White Ribbon's national video summarising national activity during the 2018 campaign.
- Introduction and implementation of the Torbay Domestic Abuse Network. This is a group of trained, supported and resourced practitioners across a range of agencies. The network is committed to supporting victims of domestic abuse across Torbay. At present there are approximately 20 Champions in 4 agencies/organisations, delivering a wide range of services. There are 2 network meetings a year, which helps Champions add to their knowledge and to build those professional and personal relationships. The Champion is seen as the lead for domestic abuse issues within their agency or unit and acts as the contact in and out of that unit/agency. They will be able to advise their colleagues on management of individual cases and ensure that they are aware of and have access to local resources and support. Champions will understand how other Champions can assist in supporting, helping and advising a victim of domestic abuse and their dependents.
- The OPCC worked with Torbay's DASV Coordinator and Operation Emotion to be able to offer services in Torbay for sexually abused men. Operation Emotion is a voluntary organisation that operates, develops and encourages services for adult male survivors of sexual abuse, linking with specialist organisations where appropriate. They develop a range of self-help initiatives that enable men to engage in a process of recovery and work with other agencies to promote best practice leading to improved services for sexually abused men.

3.3.5 These activities will raise awareness of the issues of DASV and are anticipated to contribute to an increase in reporting, and hopefully will enable earlier intervention, which is a major focus of our DASV Strategy 2018-22.

4. Governance Progress

4.1.1 The Domestic Abuse Sexual Violence Executive Board (DASVEG) was formed in June 2018. The Board is now chaired by Chief Superintendent Keith Perkin, Devon and Cornwall Police, and is made up of representatives from Torbay Council, National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company, Adult and Children's Social Care, Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) Public Health, New Devon Clinical Commissioning Group, Community Safety Partnerships and Torbay and South Devon NHS

Foundation Trust. A robust action plan, tracker and dashboard are being finalised and delivered by the multi-agency operational group.

- 4.1.2 The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) have approved a new and robust framework around DHRs. The model is based on Devon's Child Serious Case Review process and includes a clear decision making framework based on collated initial information from key partners. The process includes the addition of a structured referral/decision making form, best practice examples of key documentation including terms of reference, contracts for independent reviewers, and correspondence. The CSP have also established a DHR core group who oversee the DHR process and referrals and who report directly to the CSP Chair.

5. Next Steps and Priorities

- 5.1 Significant progress has been made in Torbay to put structures, new working practices and interventions in place to assist in reducing the impact of DASV. A full work plan is in place to increase awareness and identification, reducing the stigma, as well as work to challenge the inter-generational patterns of abuse. Progress is now being made with interventions now being operational. Key priorities for next six months:

- Robust multi agency performance framework established to assess delivery and assess impact. End of March 2019.
- Development of new innovative alliance framework contract that focuses around complexity and encompass DASV, substance misuse, mental health and housing from April 2020.
- Domestic Abuse Network to have trained 70 champions in Torbay by April 2019 to embed and change working practices across the partnership.
- IRIS project will have three GP practices trained and signed up to project by June 2019. Providing an innovative and ground breaking way of working that is being recognised nationally.
- Parental Conflict Coordinator within children services to support troubled families agenda to be in post by April 2019
- MARAC reviewed and MARAC Toolkit embed within Children Services by June 2019

Domestic abuse and sexual violence is everyone's business, however funding contributions to these services are limited. Notably, DASV services contribute to Children's safeguarding outcomes, Public Health outcomes and help some victims avoid the need for Housing Options' temporary accommodation. More broadly the services also support health and criminal justice outcomes. Further work therefore needs to be undertaken to establish a wider and broader funding base.