

Report to the Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services
Report submitted by: Interim Executive Director for Children and Young People
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Part I

Electoral Division affected:
All

Strategy for the Joint Commission of Specialist Domestic Abuse Services in Lancashire

(Appendices 'A' to 'C' refer)

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Executive Summary

This report seeks approval to secure funding for years two and three of the Domestic Abuse Plan which is a partnership commission across Lancashire. This will require the use of the Crime and Disorder reserve (£0.730m) and outline approval to carry forward a year one (2013/14) under spend of £0.455m to year three (2015/16). This will allow the project to deliver the full programme of support and have the greatest impact on domestic abuse and assist in reducing demand for social care.

Ensuring a consistent provision of domestic abuse services across Lancashire has been a shared strategic vision across statutory partners in Lancashire since November 2012. In response to that vision a substantial amount of work has taken place to ensure that the joint commissioning of services is based on need, informed by evidence and builds upon the support already available. This work has led to the development of a model of delivery (Appendix 'A' refers) and a number of partnership recommendations captured in the Domestic Abuse Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The full JSNA report sets out the prevalence of domestic abuse in the county, service mapping, evidence based good practice and service user consultation and can be found in the [Lancashire Profile](#).

While strategically partners have been supportive of the agenda, realisation of the required funding commitment from some partners has been difficult to achieve for the duration of the three year commission. This has delayed the commencement of commissioning activity and made the development of a three year funding plan complex.

The funding model for Year One has been agreed setting out interim arrangements for current service providers to pilot new ways of working. This report outlines the financial model for delivery in Years Two and Three of the commission.

Subject to approval, an open tender and procurement process will commence in November 2013 with a further report to award the new contract for the Medium and High Risk Victims Service submitted in February 2014.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services is recommended to:

- (i) Approve the use of Crime and Disorder reserve to meet the gap in funding over Years Two and Three of the joint commission of domestic abuse services (£0.730m);
- (ii) Provide outline approval to use the 2013/14 project under spend of £0.455m to support activity within year 3 of the project;
- (iii) Approve the service model for delivery of specialist domestic abuse services over Year Two and Three of the project.

Background and Advice

Domestic Abuse services have relied on grant funding for many years resulting in instability and inequity with access to services dependent on where a victim or perpetrator lives in Lancashire.

Domestic Abuse is a priority for the Lancashire Community Safety Strategy Group, the Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Board, Lancashire Children and Young People's Trust and Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board. This has been identified by the strategic assessment of crime and disorder, and the JSNA which have been produced in order to create a better understanding of the impact on children and young people, victims and perpetrators.

In addition, a recent inspection of Safeguarding and Children Looked After services by Ofsted made two requirements, these being to:

- review the existing domestic violence service provision to determine future needs and requirements including ensuring there are sufficient early intervention programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence before they enter the criminal justice system;
- ensure that there is sufficient counselling support for children who experience domestic violence before they reach the threshold for access to child protection services.

As such, there is a clear drive in Lancashire to ensure there is a robust approach to the provision of specialist domestic abuse services and so to reduce the harm caused.

This problem is not the responsibility of any single agency and so there must be wide spread recognition of how wide the repercussions reach beyond the individual and throughout the community including social welfare, the criminal justice system, refuges, health care, education, employment, childcare, and housing. Developments in the last decade have shown that taking a more pro-active, preventative approach not only saves lives but also saves public money.

Although there is a vast amount of evidence for the impact of intervention in domestic abuse cases, statutory services have been slow to acknowledge their role in prevention and reducing harm. However this is changing and this commissioning framework sets out the joint approach that will provide a core offer of services and setting out the aspiration to provide support and interventions for children and young people witnessing domestic abuse, victims and perpetrators through a coordinated approach to commissioned services, partnership activity and developing pathways.

This new response to domestic abuse will follow a robust commissioning process incorporating the principles of understand, plan, do, review. The strategy highlights the approach being taken by partners in order to secure effective provision for vulnerable victims, children and young people, and to change the behaviour of perpetrators, with a focus on securing the services for those in crisis, and investing in earlier intervention and support. This approach has been corroborated through consultation with stakeholders and service users and co-production with current providers of specialist services.

This collective approach underpinned by secure funding for years 2 and 3 will enable the development of an effective, and equitable commissioned service to support the most vulnerable members of our community. It will provide a response to the spiralling number of referrals and calls for help from statutory protective services by providing the appropriate support at the earliest opportunity. Ultimately, this strategy aims to reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse and improve outcomes for children and young people, victims and perpetrators.

Statutory partners were asked to make a contribution, which was calculated based on the estimated savings they would realise to their mainstream commissioned services if the incidence of domestic abuse was reduced. This was based on the Professor Sylvia Walby Model which identified the costs of domestic abuse to public sector organisations.

The production of a JSNA has enhanced the understanding of domestic abuse in Lancashire whilst simultaneously negotiations have continued with funding partners to agree financial contributions to the joint commissioning model.

Whilst the joint commission does not have the anticipated level of pooled funding, it will provide a much needed core offer of services funded by statutory partners, and will enable the redesign of our local services and response to domestic abuse, and provide families with earlier access to support.

The New Domestic Abuse Service Model

The JSNA provided the evidence base and recommendations that have informed the new service model which incorporates the total resource available.

It is intended that this model will reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse in Lancashire by taking an integrated, whole family approach to preventing further abuse. This ranges from protecting victims including children and young people who may witness behaviour, challenging the behaviour of perpetrators, and enhancing partnership working and practice to deliver positive outcomes.

The service model identifies the areas that cannot be addressed through any means but the joint commission funding and which will form the 'core offer', interventions that can be provided through a partnership response and 'in kind' contributions, and the remaining gaps.

The commissioned 'core offer'

- **Support for Medium and High Risk Victims**

The aim of the service is to improve the safety and wellbeing of victims, children and young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse to ensure that they are enabled to lead healthy and safe lives now and in the future. It is expected that interventions offered will include:

- independent advocacy
- one-to-one support and outreach
- accredited group work including recovery and parenting programmes
- therapeutic support
- peer support groups
- drop In sessions
- helpline

In addition, the service will be expected to act as the lead professional where appropriate, and provide information and co-ordination of support on wider issues such as housing, substance misuse, health, welfare benefits and debt management. This should include:

- working with victims to develop planning safety strategies for themselves should the abuse reoccur
- help to deal with loss and change in a safe environment
- advocacy for families accessing the Criminal Justice System and Civil Court System.
- preventing those experiencing domestic abuse from becoming victims or perpetrators in the future
- enabling children to understand what domestic violence is and that it is not their fault
- raising self esteem and confidence in victims and their families
- developing the social capacity and skills of victims and their families
- engaging services users in the coproduction of service delivery

- **Challenging the Behaviour of Perpetrators**

The provision of programmes which challenge the behaviour of perpetrators has been identified as a significant gap across the county. There are nationally accredited programmes provided for those subject to criminal justice orders on conviction. However there is little available which perpetrators can access voluntarily or be referred to where their behaviour is identified and acknowledged as problematic. Whilst there have been a number of pilot programmes over recent years there remains a lack of evidence of effective practice.

This new service is in the design stage of the service specification and aims to be functional by March 2014. The University of Central Lancashire is evaluating current practice and it is expected that this learning will inform the new service design to incorporate both one-to-one and group work where perpetrators are assessed as ready to acknowledge their behaviour is problematic. The service will align with existing high risk perpetrator programmes delivered by Lancashire Probation Trust and the Integrated Offender Management process.

- **Early Support - Children and Young People**

Initially this work-stream has been addressed through the Early Support commissioning process. Local Children and Young People's Trusts were invited to identify the level of resource to be drawn down into their area across themes including parenting support, emotional health and wellbeing, and domestic abuse. The quantity of funding drawn down by each local Trust has been significantly less than that required in order to address the amount of need in most areas. As such, the commission will seek to address the shortfall through alternate means.

Early Support services will work with children and young people and their primary carers in parallel where possible and will comprise a mixture of one-to-one and group work. The aim is to reduce harm, develop resilience, and to change attitudes towards violence and unacceptable behaviours in order to break the cycle of abusive relationships which may include therapeutic, one-to-one and group work interventions.

- **Workforce Development and Coordination**

This work-stream provides partners with an opportunity to review and revise their response to domestic abuse. Routine enquiry is acknowledged as a key tactic where partners across primary and emergency care, social care etc are encouraged to proactively identify where domestic abuse may be the root cause of presenting symptoms and issues. Specialist service providers will be expected to deliver awareness-raising sessions with partner agencies on a rolling basis.

The commission will provide additional resource to enhance the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process which ensures each appropriate agency both shares information and provides support to high risk victims and their families where possible.

Partners 'In Kind' Support

- **Criminal Justice Response**

Criminal Justice partners are working together to address areas for improvement across the system including:

- appropriate sanction and rehabilitation of perpetrators to prevent re-offending and enable them to have healthy relationships
- increased confidence of victims that the response provided by the criminal justice system will ensure they remain safe
- review of the protocol governing Specialist Domestic Violence Courts and maximising the role of Independent Violence Advocates
- identifying earlier opportunities for the identification of perpetrators through the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub

- **Prevention**

The Lancashire Schools Forum has funded the development of a Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) resource for schools which will provide both learning packages and in-house support across key stages one to four. This support will address not only domestic abuse but a range of issues and risk taking behaviours which in turn will enable children and young people to develop both healthy relationships and personal resilience.

A targeted communications strategy is in development which will promote access to support services and encourage the reporting of abuse. Key messages will challenge attitudes, thinking and behaviours which contribute to abuse. This will incorporate support for the White Ribbon Campaign and the launch of the new service when in place.

- **Awareness, Identification and Referral**

The partnership response will develop a shared understanding of thresholds for accessing support and facilitate the step up and down to the interventions most appropriate to service users. Good practice has been identified to enable the routine identification of domestic abuse in front-line services, such as health settings, and allow for appropriate referrals to support.

Review of Commissioning Arrangements

While there is national evidence as to why services should be commissioned for domestic abuse and for the interventions proposed to be commissioned, it is imperative that we establish mechanisms to measure the impact that this joint commission has in Lancashire. This is important not only because we need to ensure that all resource spent is good value for money, but equally to allow partners to make informed decisions around the future commissioning of services.

Public Health Lancashire are exploring options for an independent evaluation to be conducted which will enable effective measurement of the impact made by the new service and identify areas for development. This will build a local evidence base of

effective practice with which to build a business case for future partnership investment.

Through the open procurement and contracting process, the successful provider/s will be expected to use an effective case management and outcome measurement system which will provide detailed management information and evidence of impact on a regular basis. This in turn will be reported to contributing partners through both the Commissioning Reference Group and Lancashire Community Safety Strategy Group.

Consultations

Consultation has taken place with statutory partners, current providers and service users as to;

- the development and quality of appropriate specialist domestic abuse service provision and partner interventions for medium and high risk victims, children and young people.
- how continuous workforce development and coordination will enhance partnership responses and collaboration.
- how to ensure a cost effective multi-agency approach to domestic abuse service delivery via voluntary, community and faith sector specialist providers, and mainstream agencies working in partnership.
- how the thinking, attitudes and behaviour of perpetrators can best be challenged and addressed.

Implications

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

The service is intended to demonstrate both an improvement in outcomes and a shift in the focus of resource which is currently concentrated at providing support for high risk victims. By balancing resource, the new service should deliver an earlier response for medium risk victims of domestic abuse.

The joint funding does not intend to replace any of the current funding commitments of partners rather it will complement existing provision such as Sanctuary Schemes and other specialist provision currently funded locally. The core-offer will also complement refuge provision funded through Supporting People.

Where partners identify additional available resource, they are asked to support the aims of the strategy in developing additional services, as moving forward it would be apposite to bring together funding and commissions under one set of arrangements.

The joint funding pot is still £150,000 short which leaves a gap in provision of therapeutic interventions for children and young people. There is a further gap in the provision of specialist relationship counselling for standard risk families and couples.

Legal and Procurement

The services which form the subject of this report will be subject to a strict procurement process under the Public Contracts Regulations 2006. Procurement will take place in accordance with Treaty of Rome principles (fair and transparent process) and will entail open competition.

It is the intention to commence procurement for the Medium and High Risk Victims services late November 2013, with the Perpetrators service tender tentatively scheduled for December 2013.

Financial

This report seeks to confirm the funding for the two final years of the project (2014/15 and 2015/16). This requires two decisions:

- release of the remainder of the Crime and Disorder reserve totalling £0.730m, £0.321m in 2014/15 and £0.409m in 2015/16; and
- seek outline approval to carry forward the 2013/14 partnership under spend of £0.455m to 2015/16 (year 3).

These two decisions will allow the core offer to proceed with two full years of commissioned activity which will ensure that providers are enabled to develop and deliver activities which it is anticipated will have a significant impact upon social care demand. The approval sought to carry forward the 2013/14 under spend is outline approval as the ability to carry forward will be confirmed by the County Treasurer and the Partnership Board closer towards year end.

Appendix 'B' identifies in detail what contributions are being made from partners who were asked to make a recurring commitment for three years beginning in 2013/14. A number of partners have also made contributions in kind which are also identified below the cash commitments.

Appendix 'C' sets out an analysis of the funding movements from initial project approval to its current position. This is included to identify the stages that have been gone through in the last 12 months so that members have a clear view of the process. Difficulties in securing funding from partners for the duration of the project have resulted in delays within the commissioning of activity. A number of issues should be noted:

- an in year under spend (2013/14) of £0.455m has arisen due to a delayed start in commissioning activity caused by issues in securing funding from a variety of partners. It is proposed to use this under spend to close the 2015/16 shortfall rather than seek additional funds from directorates as was originally planned. The table below outlines how this funding has been allocated in the first year and the related under spend:

Work Theme area	Year 1 Allocation (£)	Year 1 Forecast (£)	Variance (£)
Work force and coordination	75,127	37,563	30,217
Early Support	255,433	187,288	68,145
Medium & High Risk Support	1,021,733	809,630	212,035
Perpetrators	150,255	12,521	137,724
Totals	1,502,548	1,047,003	455,447

- the £0.155m "shortfall" across all three years identified in Appendix C compared to the original proposals relates to therapeutic interventions for children and young people has been delayed until 2014/15. This is not part of the core offer above as it will only go ahead if additional funding can be secured from Public Health. These discussions are currently under way;
- the additional shortfall in 2015/16 relates to early support funding which will only be forthcoming if evidence based outcome monitoring identifies the financial benefit of the project exceeds the investment needed.

The table below illustrates how funding for the Project will be allocated across the work-streams in 2014/15 and 2015/16 should further contributions be forthcoming from Early Support in 2015/16 (Year 3):

Work Stream Funding Allocation	%	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)
Workforce and Co-ordination	5%	75,122	75,122
Early Support	17%	255,416	255,416
Medium and High Risk Support	68%	1,021,665	1,021,665
Perpetrators	10%	150,245	150,245
Totals	100%	1,502,449	1,502,449

If Public Health funding for therapeutic support can be secured then an additional commissioning process will be undertaken for this activity.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
Future Provision of Independent Domestic Abuse Advocates	September 2013	Mel Ormesher, Directorate for Children and Young People, 07920 702595
Report to the Leader of the County Council and Cabinet Members for Children and Young People and Adult and Community Services – 'County Council Investment in Domestic Abuse Services'	14 December 2012	Andy Milroy, Office of the Chief Executive, (01772) 536050

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A.