

Report for: Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel, 14th November 2019

Title: An Update On Haringey's Domestic Violence Perpetrator Service

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Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision: Non Key Decision**

1. Describe the issue under consideration

Violence against women and girls is a serious issue for Haringey. Haringey has one of the highest rates of reported domestic abuse across London. In the rolling year to March 2019, there were 5,204 domestic incidents with 3,304 domestic abuse offences reported to the police. Haringey currently has the sixth highest incident rate per 1000 population (18.9 per 1000).

In the same period, 776 sexual offences (with 346 of those rape) were recorded which represents a nearly 10% increase in sexual offences from the previous 12-month period. It is estimated that nearly 3,500 women and girls are affected by Female Genital Mutilation in Haringey with 110 new cases reported between April 2017 and March 2018. We also know that there are high, but hidden levels of forced marriage and crimes committed in the name of 'honour', with 37 cases identified during the audit in 2018.

Haringey's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2016-2026 has been developed in partnership with a wide range of statutory, voluntary and community organisations from across Haringey. The 4 key strategic priorities are:

1. Developing a coordinated community response where everyone is empowered to work towards ending violence against women and girls
2. Developing robust prevention and early intervention approaches to reach everyone in our diverse communities
3. Ensuring our support services are tailored and survivor-led to meet the individual needs of every victim/survivor
4. Ensuring that perpetrators are held to account

The strategy is available from:

https://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/vawg_strategy.pdf

Some key achievements in Haringey's VAWG strategy delivery in the last 12 months include

- 150 people engaged in the 16 days of Action campaign
- Over 800 professionals were trained in VAWG awareness
- 459 cases were referred to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) with 459 safety plans
- 369 young people engaged in the Protect our Women educational programme in schools
- Over 60 men were supported through the perpetrator programme
- Over 1000 women were supported through specialist services, such as advocacy.

Focus on perpetrators

Services and support for victims continue to be absolutely key, however they should also be underpinned by appropriate prevention and intervention strategies which directly target domestic violence perpetrators and assist and enable them to stop offending. Research shows that many perpetrators repeat their violence in future relationships and previous domestic violence offending was the strongest predictor of further domestic violence offending (Hester and Westmarland, 2005). It is estimated that 1 in 4 perpetrators are repeat offenders and that some have as many as six different victims. Perpetrator programmes focus on working with men to acknowledge and change their abusive behaviour, tackling issues such as male domination, sexual respect and the impact domestic abuse has on children.

This paper provides an update on Haringey's Domestic Violence Perpetrator Service. Haringey commissions the Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP), now part of Richmond Fellowship, to provide perpetrator support services to adult men and to young people exhibiting abuse in their own relationships. There is also consultation support for social workers as the service is co-located within the Haringey Council Children and Young Peoples Service (CYPS).

2. Recommendations

The Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel is asked to note and consider the following:

- 1) The planned changes to the Haringey domestic violence perpetrator programme
- 2) To support and champion multidisciplinary working amongst partner organisations to raise awareness of VAWG and the available interventions, in particular how we can champion a zero tolerance approach to violence against women and girls in our communities.

3. Introduction and Background

Research on perpetrator services

Domestic violence perpetrator services emerged in the UK in the late 1980s, with Change in Scotland and Domestic Violence Intervention Programme (DVIP) in London. Each had a clearly developed curriculum, influenced in part by precursor

programmes from the USA. Initially, they delivered services for both self-referred and court-mandated men.

Research on perpetrator programmes is still in its infancy and there is limited evidence to make solid conclusions about their effectiveness. It is, therefore important that we evaluate and monitor our local programme.

Studies suggests the following features should be considered as part of perpetrator programmes:

- Women and children's safety need to be central to any programmes (or other interventions) for violent men and programmes should offer separate parallel support for women.
- Programmes alone may be ineffective in achieving change in the behaviour of violent men, and must be accompanied by effective legal sanctions, as well as wider agency links.
- Approaches based on cognitive-behavioural approaches that also take gender into account are more likely to be effective.
- Whatever the approach adopted, work with violent men requires specific skills. A central feature of this work must be the message that violence is *not* acceptable and must aim to challenge/ stop/ prevent further violence.
- A wide range of agencies may have domestic violence perpetrators as their clients, and practitioners in health, social care and other services need to develop the skills to ask perpetrators about violent and abusive behaviour as well as knowing where to refer (Hester et al. 2007).

The Haringey Domestic Violence Perpetrator Service

Haringey's Domestic Violence Perpatrator Programme is called the Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP). The DVIP enables perpetrators of domestic violence to access specialist interventions and support to help reduce and prevent further domestic violence as well as providing safety for victim/survivors and family members, where applicable. The service can support adult men choosing to address their behaviour. There is also a programme for young people exhibiting concerning behaviour either in their own intimate relationships or towards parents or siblings.

The DVIP is part of the coordinated response to address violence against women and girls, where agencies and services work together to increase the safety of survivors, hold perpetrators accountable for their behaviour and challenge the social tolerance of these forms of crime and abuse.

The DVIP has three core elements: expert risk assessment, a violence prevention programme for perpetrators and a women's support service. The violence prevention programme works to bring about changes in perpetrators' attitudes and behaviours. It is not anger management or counselling. It is a group programme designed specifically to reduce domestic violence. The service uses a combination of cognitive, therapeutic and teaching techniques to promote and support changes.

The DVIP is commissioned to accept 28 referrals per annum. In 2018/2019, the service received 64 referrals. The majority of referrals came from CYPS, but they also received a number of self-referrals. Around half of the referrals proceed to 1-1 sessions or having suitability assessments for the group programmes (the men need

to acknowledge their behaviour or show some insight, or they are not accepted). All the female partners or ex-partners are offered parallel support when the men are on group programmes. The service provider also provides advice and capacity building to staff within CYPS as well as training and development support. This is included within the contract.

The Haringey DVIP was established following a competitive tendering process, the original contract was awarded in 2016 for a period of one year with an option to extend for two further periods of 12 months. The first extension was utilised during 2017/2018. The contract was further extended from 1st September to 31st August 2019. The cost of the service is £69,839 per year.

The option to not extend was considered but it was decided to extend the contract for a year as a return to spot purchasing of assessments is costly and does not allow for the additionality of services provided through a contract.

Previously, perpetrator assessments were spot purchased at a cost of at least £4800 each with no perpetrator group programme. A contract provides more efficient use of resources.

The £69,839 cost of the contract extension was met from the Children in Need of Support and Protection budget (£49,839) with £20,000 from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime already transferred to the Support and Protection budget.

The DVIP aims to deliver specialist support to perpetrators, including both men and women aged 16 years and over. The service was designed to cater for perpetrators who recognise a need to address their abusive behaviour and therefore access the programme voluntarily.

Clients are referred by professional organisations using a standard referral form. Clients can also self-refer in to the programme. Individuals may also be signposted to the perpetrator service by various other organisations. Following referral, all clients are assessed for their eligibility and willingness to complete the programme. Following acceptance onto the scheme, a client is offered personalised and ongoing support through a menu of options including: an awareness workshop; individual sessions or meetings with support worker; an eight-week programme of structured group sessions; and flexible drop in hub on completion of the programme.

Some of the key issues raised by the service providers include:

- DVIP cannot currently support men who do not speak English, meaning many referrals cannot be supported. There continues to be a high proportion of referrals for men whose first language is not English (an estimated 60% of all DVIP perpetrator referrals in Haringey), but with no additional provision for DVIP to work with them on a 1-2-1 basis. Many of these referrals also identify alcohol misuse.
- Work required to be undertaken with non-English speaking men on a 1-2-1 basis cannot be done realistically within the timeframe of the Child Protection process. English speakers can access treatment within 5 to 6 weeks whereas those whose first language is not English may remain on a waiting list for between 6 to 12 months. This is leading to a clear disadvantage for families where English is not the father's first language.

- Referrals are currently being received at a late stage (i.e. where children are currently in proceedings).
- The time between the key abusive incident taking place and any meaningful work being able to be done with the father is lengthy. This appears to be due to Social Workers not approaching DVIP for a consultation at the early stages of a case but waiting until much further into a CP process or even at PLO stage. On a number of occasions, the abusive father is remaining in the family home throughout that time before DVIP get involved.
- The high number of referrals for men with alcohol and substance misuse issues.
- The high number of perpetrators linked to women who are discussed in MARAC who do not live in Haringey.

Outcomes

We are currently designing a wider set of outcome measures for the service, beyond the qualitative information described above and the numbers of people going through the services. This will enable us to monitor and improve the service more effectively.

Next steps

With effect from the 1st September 2019 the existing contract has been extended for 12 months to enable Richmond Fellowship and Haringey Council Childrens Social Care (CSC) to:

- a) Identify community groups to develop and train community elders to support men from the Turkish and Polish communities to act as interpreters and mentors for male perpetrators of Domestic Abuse
- b) To deliver a tailored version of the DVIP programme to include 6 weeks of group work for males whose children are subject to Children in Need (CIN)/ Child Protection (CP) or Public Law, Pre Proceeding plans and to then complete the remaining 20 weeks targeting those most in need of the full programme.
- c) To accept referrals from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) supporting the screening of Domestic Abuse notification that satisfy the threshold for Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and earlier interception of step up of cases from Early Help reducing the time lag between incident and intervention.
- d) Develop targeted work with the Youth Offending Service to better enable DVIP's Yuva Young People's Service to re sharpen the focus on working within families
- e) Widening the Domestic Abuse reach by jointly training Designated Safeguarding Officer's, Social work Domestic Abuse Champions and Designated Officers from Early Help to complete the MARAC Masterclass through the Children's Social Care Academy. A key component of this training will support the Champions and designated officers to promote the engagement of Fathers.
- f) Co design the quarterly monitoring reports

The service will continue to be co-located within the assessment team in children and young people's service and CSC will work to support the delivery of the DVIP programme from an accessible Haringey building.

4. Contribution to strategic outcomes

1. Haringeys Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2016-2026: One of the 4 key strategic objectives is holding perpetrators to account.
2. The Borough Plan 2019-2023.
3. In March 2018, the Mayor of London published a new strategy, 'A Safer City for Women and Girls' to end violence against women and girls. The Strategy focusses on three areas of Prevention including: Tackling Perpetrators and Protecting and Supporting Victims of VAWG.

Finance and Procurement

This is an update report for noting and as such there are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

Legal

This is an update report for noting and as such there are no direct legal implications associated with this report.

Equality

The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:

- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not

Violence against women and girls is a form of gender inequality. Women and girls are disproportionately impacted by the forms of abuse and crimes that are included in the definition of violence against women and girls. Adult men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators of domestic abuse – 87% of all perpetrators. Perpetrators are also young in Haringey 35% are aged between 25-34. The programme works to support the perpetrators to change their behaviour and reduce inequality.

Improving the Council's response to violence against women and girls demonstrates a commitment to address inequality issues for that group. The perpetrator service is a central element to the Council's work on helping to prevent violence against women and girls.

Objective criteria for accepting perpetrators have been developed and do not discriminate against any group in selection for the project. Further safeguards are built into the project, by developing a system of monitoring covering application and selection for the project and outcomes by the protected characteristics of age, sex, sexuality, disability and race and ethnicity. While most domestic violence perpetrators are men. DVIP can also offer interventions to reduce women's abuse of male partners, and abuse in gay and lesbian relationships.

An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken before the contract was awarded in 2016.

5. Use of Appendices

N/A

6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

N/A