



**To:** Business Coordination Board

**From:** Chief Constable

**Date:** 26 November 2015

## **DOMESTIC ABUSE UPDATE**

### **1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to report to the Business Co-ordination Board (“the Board”) Cambridgeshire Constabulary’s (“the Constabulary”) current service provision, action plan progression and performance delivery in relation to Domestic Abuse.

### **2. Recommendation**

2.1 It is recommended that the Board notes the contents of this paper.

### **3. Background**

3.1 Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) undertook an inspection in November 2013 on the Constabulary’s response to domestic abuse. The Constabulary was disappointed by the HMIC findings following the November inspection. However, when the HMIC inspection team revisited in February 2014 they highlighted the progress that the Constabulary had made in addressing its response, noting substantial improvements to victims of violence.

3.2 As part of the National HMIC Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Vulnerability Inspection programme, HMIC returned to complete a further inspection of Domestic Abuse in July 2015. The results of this latest inspection is due to be published on 15th December 2015.

3.3 The Constabulary continues to see Domestic Abuse as a priority with considerable energy continuing to be put into improving the end to end service to victims and families. It is recognised that there is still work to be done as it is clear that it is not a one size fits all approach as there are many elements to each case that are different. For example the approach taken with a sibling on sibling matter will be different to

partner on partner but none the less all included within the same data set. There are many factors that will inform the overall assessment of risk and we continue to work hard with all partners to provide the best service, safeguard all involved and bring offenders to justice.

#### **4. Action Plan**

- 4.1 The original 125 point national Action Plan continues to be reviewed however the majority of the recommendations within this plan have now been completed. Given the continuing development in this area, a further end to end review of domestic abuse provision has been undertaken and additional recommendations combined with the outstanding areas. The live action plan now has 33 points that are currently being progressed and work is well underway to address this plan.

#### **5. Governance**

##### **5.1 Partnership Governance**

Good partnership arrangements exist across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Governance, scrutiny and strategic direction is delivered through the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Boards for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. In order to develop closer working and a county wide approach, it has been agreed to trial a combined Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Board with effect from January 2016.

##### **5.2 Internal Governance**

A robust governance framework exists within the Constabulary with overall strategic direction and accountability for Domestic Abuse performance resting with the Assistant Chief Constable. Performance is managed through the Force Performance Board which holds the Heads of Department and Local Policing to account for performance delivery. Underpinning this are a number of other meetings ensuring that the management of domestic abuse and continued progress and performance delivery against the action plan is maintained.

- 5.3 A revised Domestic Abuse Strategy has been completed.

#### **6. Performance**

- 6.1 Domestic Abuse performance has improved in recent months. Prosecution possible outcome rates for August were 21.9%, September 39% and October 29.8%. Within the DAISU (High and Medium Risk cases) performance has also improved, with prosecution outcome rates rising from 31.0% in August 2015, to 31.7% and 31.4% in September and October 2015. It is recognised that there remains work to be done to improve this still further however this is addressed within the action plan.

- 6.2 Reported Domestic Abuse crime has increased with 443 crimes reported in August, 331 in September and 382 in October. Crimes managed within the DAISU have mirrored this rise with 173 reported in August 2015, 149 in September 2015, and 183 in October 2015. An increase in reporting is still seen as a positive indicator as this

enables greater safeguarding opportunities, even in those cases where a victim declines to engage.

- 6.3 The number of arrests for offences relating to Domestic Abuse has increased over recent months as part of a continued plan to improve the initial response to domestic abuse, securing and preserving evidence using “golden hour” principles. This increases the opportunity of evidence led prosecutions in cases where the victim declines to support a prosecution either from the start or part way through an investigation. This has included improved use of body worn video.
- 6.4 Given an overall increase in demand for police resources, response times to reports of Domestic Abuse continue to be a pressure for the Constabulary. However, response times have improved over recent months as a result of continued effective resource management by the Force Control Room, this said, the Constabulary recognise there is room for further improvement here and work has been commissioned to address this task.

## **7. Service Delivery**

- 7.1 Domestic Abuse continues to be a priority for the Constabulary. All High and Medium Risk investigations are undertaken by the Domestic Abuse Investigation and Safeguarding Unit (DAISU) which comprises of specialist investigators who will oversee the safeguarding of the victim, management of the offender and the overall risk as well as liaising with partner agencies to coordinate activity.
- 7.2 The Constabulary continues to have a very effective Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), currently working across two sites at Godmanchester and Peterborough. The MASH is made up from key partner agencies and will coordinate the risk assessment and information sharing to ensure safeguarding strategies are set and managed.
- 7.3 The Victims’ Hub is well established and manages individual victim contact for all medium and standard risk Domestic Abuse cases. Where necessary they will liaise with any allocated IDVA and Case Officer, joining up their communication and any ongoing support/safeguarding requirements to provide a professional service to victims.

## **8. Other Activity to improve the current response to Domestic Abuse**

- 8.1 Additional Domestic Abuse and safeguarding training has been delivered to Officers and Force Control Room Staff.
- 8.2 Advancing use of the Constabulary’s technology has continued to improve the quantity and quality of evidence gathered in domestic abuse cases, all of which is immediately available to officers and ultimately the courts in order to present high quality and timely evidence in a case to enhance prosecution outcomes.

- 8.3 A month long media campaign has been run by the Constabulary during November to raise awareness of Domestic Abuse in its many forms. This has been done as part of the Constabulary media calendar, recognising that occurrences of Domestic Abuse will increase on the run up to and during the Christmas period.
- 8.4 MARAC is an established process that is proven to reduce risks to victims of DA and their families. MARAC is a well embedded process and a wide range of partner agencies participate and understand their role within it. The process is clearly articulated and each meeting is chaired by an agency representative who has specific MARAC training. MARAC has been very successful in bringing together partner agencies to formally discuss safeguarding need.
- 8.5 A review of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) provision across the Constabulary has been carried out given an increase in referred cases. A new proposed process has been developed to manage MARAC on a daily basis through the working in the MASH. This will see a streamlined partnership process where higher risk issues can be identified at an earlier stage and appropriate safeguarding plans put in place across relevant partner agencies.
- 8.6 The new process fully embraces all the principles and aims of the current MARAC process and seeks to build upon them enhancing current provision and providing a more effective safeguarding process.
- 8.7 Peterborough are trialling the use of a Domestic Abuse Response Team, to attend and manage all reports of Domestic Abuse within the Peterborough area. This team went live on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015, and will significantly enhance the investigative opportunities for each report of Domestic Abuse, whilst maximising safeguarding of victims at the same time. This will be reviewed in three months to assess effectiveness and impact with the potential for expansion to other areas if successful.
- 8.8 Other work in relation to improving the use of preventative measures is being undertaken. In particular work is underway to improve the use of Domestic Violence Prevention Orders and Domestic Violence Protection Notices which complement the current range of civil protection orders to safeguard victims.
- 8.9 Options are being explored with the Home Office through the National Domestic Abuse working group, to establish an agreed form of victim follow up for feedback questioning. This will enable learning opportunities, whilst incorporating potential follow up safeguarding review. This may be a function undertaken by the Victims' Hub however details are still being finalised.

## **9. Recommendation**

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Board notes the contents of this paper.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

<p><b>Source Documents</b></p>	<p>Domestic Abuse updates, Business Coordination Board, January, June, October 2014 and June 2015</p> <p><a href="http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/">http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/</a></p> <p>'Cambridgeshire Constabulary's approach to tackling domestic abuse', HMIC, March 2014</p> <p><a href="http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/cambridgeshire-approach-to-tackling-domestic-abuse.pdf">http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/cambridgeshire-approach-to-tackling-domestic-abuse.pdf</a></p> <p>'Everyone's business: Improving the police response to domestic abuse', HMIC, March 2014</p> <p><a href="http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/improving-the-police-response-to-domestic-abuse.pdf">http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/improving-the-police-response-to-domestic-abuse.pdf</a></p>
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