

REPORT TO: Safer Policy and Performance Board
DATE: 12 September 2017
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director –
Enterprise Community and Resources
PORTFOLIO: Community Safety
SUBJECT: Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
WARDS: All

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update the Safer Policy and Performance Board in relation to the activities being supported across the Borough in response to domestic abuse and sexual violence.

2. RECOMMENDATION: That members of the Board consider and comment on any aspect of this report.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Attached as an Appendix to this report is the latest update report on Domestic Violence that was considered by the Halton Partnership.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications contained within this report.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCILS PRIORITIES

5.1 A Healthy Halton

To remove barriers that disable people and contribute to poor health by working across partnership to address the wider determinants of health such as unemployment, education and skills, housing, crime and environment.

Examples:

1. Preventable cause of death / suicide
2. Preventable cause of infant mortality
3. Preventable cause of mental health
4. Preventable cases presenting at A & E

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

One-fifth of employed women take time off work because of domestic violence and 2% lose their jobs as a direct result of abuse. The Equality and Human Rights Commission estimates that 56% of those enduring

abuse are frequently late for work and 54% miss at least three days a year due to abuse.

The direct cost of domestic abuse to UK business is around £1.9 billion per year, excluding lost productivity and performance. The human and emotional costs to individuals affected by the issue are huge, and growing numbers of employers are waking up to the fact that domestic violence is a health and wellbeing issue.

Halton commission services to support victims to increase and manage their income, including access to appropriate, supportive advice services. To assist victims to develop better financial management skills and to address debt through appropriate sign posting to other services and providers.

5.3 Children and Young People in Halton

Children and young people in Halton are emotionally, physically and sexually healthy and Children and young people will feel safe at home, in school and in their communities. For example, ensuring homes are healthy safe environments through offering support to parents and providing access for aftercare support for victims of sexual violence whether a child or young person.

5.4 A Safer Halton

To understand and tackle the problem of domestic abuse in all its forms. For example, through ensuring adult victims have access to protective and supportive measures reduces the level of domestic incidents and the subsequent impact on the environment with regards to crime and ASB.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

These are contained within the report.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Women and men from minority communities can face very different experiences and barriers. They can experience forms of violence unique to their community such as forced marriage, and crimes in the name of honour. In some communities, the violence can be perpetrated by their own families.

Domestic abuse can take many forms. Parents who force their children to

marry often justify their actions as protecting their children and preserving cultural or religious traditions, but this is a form of domestic abuse. Every major faith condemns forced marriage and freely given consent is a prerequisite of Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh marriage.

Up to 17,000 women in Britain are subjected to 'honour' related violence and an estimated 1,000 British Asian girls are forced into marriage each year.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse this includes people from the LGBT communities of Cheshire with 1 in 4 people in this community experiencing domestic violence.

Information tells us that often people from the LGBT community feel isolated or lack the confidence to come forward. Sometimes there is little understanding about domestic abuse because there hasn't been much information or discussion in the LGBT communities about the issue. They can feel isolated from support groups that are seen as just supporting heterosexual women.

Male victims in same sex relationships are particularly vulnerable they often fail to recognise their experience as domestic abuse if it does happen to them or know how to respond. There is a fear of not being believed, 'outing' themselves to services and a belief that services may not have the knowledge or resources to work with LGBT individuals.

Halton commissions inclusive services supporting men, women and children from every background without prejudice.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None under the meaning of the Act