

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Safer Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	13 November 2012
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Strategic Director, Communities
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Community Safety
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
<b>WARDS:</b>	All

<b>1.0</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>
1.1	To update the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board in relation to the activities being supported across the Borough in response to domestic abuse and sexual violence.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION That members of the Board consider and comment on any aspect of this report.</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>SUPPORTING INFORMATION</b>
3.1	<p><b>Halton Domestic Abuse Forum Strategic Group</b></p> <p>Halton Domestic Abuse Forum (HDAF) Strategic Group was established to provide overall direction, control management and guidance for the response to Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence within Halton. It acts as a multi-agency partnership board of lead officers and key representatives, which takes strategic decisions aimed at tackling domestic abuse and sexual violence in their widest forms and provide support to all victims within our area. The Forum is responsible for determining and implementing policy, coordinating activity between agencies, and facilitating training. It evaluates the responses we have locally for victims, children living in households where domestic violence is a feature and to consider provision for perpetrators. The Forum promotes inter-agency cooperation, to encourage and help develop effective working relationships between different services and agencies, based on mutual understanding and trust. In order to develop and sustain a high level of commitment to the protection of victims of domestic abuse and affected children and young people.</p> <p>Dwayne Johnson Strategic Director Communities Halton Borough Council has handed over the Chair position to Jane Lunt from Halton &amp; St Helens Primary Care Trust Strategic Lead- Children NHS Merseyside.</p>

3.2	<p><b>Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Development Workshop</b></p> <p>On the 19<sup>th</sup> June a MARAC Development Workshop was held. The purpose of this session was to review and assess the MARAC process from a multi-agency operational perspective at present and agree actions in order to improve the outcomes of the meeting.</p> <p>Michelle Phillips from Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) opened the session with a presentation, providing some background and insight into the MARAC process.</p> <p>The event was very well received by all agencies involved locally with the MARAC process. HDAF monitor and review the MARAC to ensure that the process is as effective as it possibly can be in terms of reducing risk and protecting victims as well as their children.</p>
3.3	<p><b>White Ribbon Relay – Survivors Awareness Raising Event</b></p> <p>The White Baton arrived was given a warm welcome from residents staying at the Women’s Refuge = on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2012 having been couriered over from St Asaph by Flint and Denbighshire Police Motorcycle.</p> <p>Halton Survivors of Domestic Abuse hosted the NATIONAL WHITE RIBBON RELAY on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2012 at the Stobart Stadium. Halton Survivors of Domestic Abuse ran a symbolic relay with the White baton to signify to the journey from victim to survivor, supported by a wide range of local partnership agencies as part of a national relay to raise awareness about the links between major sporting events and violence against women. The Halton Survivors relayed across the pitch, with one victim will beginning the journey picking up more victims as ‘she’ makes the journey to survivor on the other side of the pitch. Sitting on the stands were representatives from many local agencies that support victims and families as they make this transition.</p> <p>Cllr Shaun Osborne Chairman of the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Group welcomed delegates to this prestigious event. Opera Singer Stephanie Guidera sang ‘One Moment in Time’ by Whitney Houston as part of this awareness raising event. After Halton’s event the baton was ceremoniously handed over to Warrington and the White Ribbon Event Relay continued on its cross country journey.</p> <p>The event was very well received by the Partner agencies involved and the Survivors themselves felt that this was a successful event. It received local press coverage in addition, a short clip of the event was loaded onto ‘You Tube’ under the heading ‘White Ribbon Event Halton’.</p> <p><i>The purpose of the Halton Survivors Group is; To establish a strong working relationship with service providers within the Halton area To highlight and promote good practice To identify areas for development in</i></p>

	<p><i>maintaining a high level of accessible support for both men and women experiencing Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence To raise and maintain a high level of awareness and understanding of the impact of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence on children, families and individuals To provide a voice for service users accessing Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence services to help develop policies and enhance service provision.</i></p>
<p>3.4</p>	<p><b>Halton Domestic Abuse Strategic Group Development – The Impact of Domestic Abuse on Children and Young People</b></p> <p>Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence are issues that affect children and young people. Ensuring that young people are able to identify abuse and have the knowledge and information available to them to enable them to make and identify healthy relationships in central to raising expectations both in males and females.</p> <p>As part of The HDAF commitment to reducing the impact of domestic abuse for children and young people a strategic development session took place on the <b>3<sup>rd</sup> September at 9:30 – 12:30</b> at the Foundry Widnes. Joanna Sharpen from the AVA Project facilitated this session.</p> <p>The purpose of this session was to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the current Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy.</li> <li>• Protecting Victims. Protecting Children.</li> <li>• Working together to defeat domestic abuse and its impact</li> <li>• What works for young people?</li> <li>• Tackling Domestic Abuse and Strengthening “Troubled Families” (Inspiring Families)</li> <li>• Consider appropriate performance measures relating to domestic abuse and children and young people specifically.</li> </ul> <p>As a result of the development session a specific action plan has been developed to support children and young people affected by domestic abuse in Halton with short, medium and longer terms actions.</p> <p>The actions identified within the action plan will assist with the effectiveness of help and protection provided to children and young people. Arrangements to ensure that children and young people are effectively and consistently identified as residing in households where domestic abuse is a feature at all levels of risk must be monitored and challenged. Children and young people must have the opportunities to develop their personal skill sets as to their understanding of healthy relationships, domestic abuse and its implications as victims and as perpetrators as well as improving Halton Children’s understanding of sexual relationships, sexual exploitation and indeed consent.</p> <p>When services have concerns that a child is suffering or witnessing domestic abuse at home, they must be encouraged to have the confidence to provide children and young people with the opportunity to disclose;</p>

	<p>share information promptly and appropriately in order to protect children in the borough. The protection of children and young people is everyone's business and therefore all agencies working with children must take a proactive response and take positive action against the harms caused by domestic abuse.</p>
3.5	<p><b>Training</b></p> <p>Halton Domestic Abuse Service has been delivering bespoke training sessions to Cheshire Police. As Police officers are often the frontline staff that come into contact with victims for the first time having the ability to successfully identify domestic abuse in all its forms; understanding as to why a victim may stay in abusive relationship the cycle of abuse and the ability to demonstrate compassion and belief in the victim is very much central to their role and key to assisting victims of this crime. In addition, the value of having the tools to effectively signpost victims to support services with knowledge of local provision cannot be underestimated.</p> <p>As part of this training, Halton Domestic Abuse Survivors Group members have been sharing real life local experiences to give officers greater insight as to the value of this work demonstrating both the best and worst practises.</p> <p>Ensuring that the voice of local survivors is heard is a key aspect of the Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2011-14.</p>
3.6	<p><b>Halton MARAC</b> has a current rolling NI 32 performance level of 31%. 79 cases were discussed in quarter 1 compared to the same period last year (42) with 31 repeats seen this quarter compared to 10 in Q1 last year. The number of children involved - 102 this quarter is 110% higher than the 31 recorded in Q1 last year. When comparing quarter 1 last year with this year, it should be taken into account that as of August 2011 there are now 2 MARAC meetings per month.</p> <p>CAADA (Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse) recommend that Halton should be considering a % repeat referral rate of between 28% – 40%.</p>
3.7	<p><b>Specialist Domestic Violence Court</b> - 37% of cases in quarter 1 had successful court outcomes, lower than the 75% recorded in quarter 1 last year. 139 cases were seen compared with 36 in quarter 1 last year. The SDVC court is reporting cases differently this quarter and now includes multiple visits for the same case being counted separately. If outcomes alone are used for comparison, then the successful case rate increases to 84% from a total of 62 cases</p>
3.8	<p><b>Crown Prosecution Service</b> – pre charge cases at 128 in quarter 1 are lower than any quarter last year. The number of defendants (93) is higher than any quarter last year, as is successful prosecutions at 84%.</p>

<b>4.0</b>	<b>POLICY IMPLICATIONS</b>
4.1	There are no policy implications contained within this report.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCILS PRIORITIES</b>
5.1	<p><b>A Healthy Halton</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preventable cause of death</li> <li>2. Preventable cause of infant mortality</li> <li>3. Preventable cause of mental health</li> <li>4. Preventable cases presenting at A &amp; E</li> </ol>
5.2	<p><b>Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton</b></p> <p>Domestic abuse has a detrimental impact on employment. Among employed women who suffered domestic abuse in the last year 21% took time off work and a further 2% lost their jobs.</p> <p>To maximise an individuals potential to increase and manage their income and manage their income, including access to appropriate, supportive advice services assisting victims to develop better financial management skills and to address debt through appropriate sign posting.</p>
5.3	<p><b>Children and Young People in Halton</b></p> <p>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.</p>
5.4	<p><b>A Safer Halton</b></p> <p>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.</p>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>RISK ANALYSIS</b>

6.1	These are contained within the report.
7.0	<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>
7.1	No financial implications to note within this report.
8.0	<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES</b>
8.1	<p><b>Victims of domestic violence and abuse aged 16 and 17 will be recognised under a new cross-government definition</b></p> <p>The definition of domestic violence will now include young people under 18 and is the latest action by the government to tackle violence against women and girls.</p> <p>A change to the official definition of domestic violence used across government will aim to increase awareness that young people in this age-group do experience domestic violence and abuse. This follows on from the Government's successful <a href="#">Teenage Relationship Abuse Campaign (Opens in a new window)</a> and is backed up by the British Crime Survey 2009/10 which found that 16-19-year-olds were the group most likely to suffer abuse from a partner.</p>
9.0	<b>LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972</b>
9.1	None under the meaning of the Act