

TITLE OF REPORT: **Domestic Abuse Review – Update**

REPORT OF: **Susan Butler – Service Manager: Care, Wellbeing and Learning**

Summary

This report provides an overview of the latest developments in relation to the recently completed Domestic Abuse Review that has been carried out within Gateshead. It will provide an overview of revised delivery model, update on some of the activity that has been achieved in recent months and provide details of challenges to overcome.

Introduction

As a reminder, a Domestic Abuse Review has been carried out to eliminate duplication and to strengthen our collective responses to victims, their families and children and to perpetrators. Following several internal reviews, it was recognised that services were fragmented across different Council services and the support offered was inconsistent. It was subsequently agreed by GMT to unify all domestic abuse functions into a single team in July 2018, to provide support and help, regardless of risk-level – and a lot of activity has been carried out in recent months to establish a revised operating model.

Key Current Activity and Performance

- Established the revised Domestic Abuse Team from 1 August 2018 to address the Community Safety Board strategic priority on Domestic Abuse.
- The team comprises of nine individuals, making up 7 FTE posts with the final staff member joining the team early October.
- A dedicated Domestic Abuse Helpline has been established: 0191 433 3333 which is supported by a centralised email: domesticabuseteam@gateshead.gov.uk or secure email domesticabuseteam@gateshead.gcsx.gov.uk
- Whilst continuing to offer support to individuals referred to the service via existing routes the early focus of the team has been to standardise practice and adopt consistent methods of assessment.
- The team has developed a threshold document to assist partner agencies to access the service, this will be supported by a request for Domestic Abuse Support form on CareFirst, and a draft referral pathway flowchart to enable agencies to understand the referral pathway process (Appendix 1).

- During the first five months of 2018/19 a total of 684 referrals have been received, up from 549 referrals at the same point last year. Of these referrals where contact was established 73% requested a service or received initial advice. Of cases closed during this period, 27% were supported to the point where risks were evidenced to be reduced, and a further 28% received safety planning advice.
- An Operational guidance document is under development and this will form the foundation of the performance management framework for the team. The recording and reporting systems to support the work of the team are being developed through the council-wide CareFirst case management system. The assessment, planning and case management process will incorporate risk identification and safety planning along with a final assessment at case closure. This will allow the team to track progress to identify if risks have reduced, remained static or increased. The introduction of a weekly risk management group, chaired by the Assistant Team Manager will monitor the performance of the team and allow for the sharing of risk and management oversight of high risk cases that are cause for concern within the team and the Local Authority.
- To promote the new service to internal services/teams and external partner agencies the team has worked with the Council's Communications Team to design a suite of posters, the first is (attached) and a leaflet (draft attached). The posters will be displayed across the Borough and the posters and leaflets will be available at a planned launch day. The date for the launch will be provisionally to coincide with White Ribbon Day which is Sunday 25th November. White Ribbon Day is also known as the International Day for the Eradication of Violence against Women and is an annual day to raise awareness of family violence. The new team has also been publicised through the Autumn issue of Council News and will also feature in the September edition of Gateshead Now.
- To further improve multi-agency working representatives from the Domestic Abuse Team attend the daily Integrated Referral and Assessment Team (IRAT) triage meetings. This allows real-time sharing of information relating to incidents raising concerns regarding child welfare, including all relevant domestic related incidents.
- In addition to direct one to one support delivered to individuals the new team will also deliver the national recognised 'Freedom Programme' alongside the locally developed: Surviving Trauma and Abuse: Recovering Together (START) sessions. These programmes aim to help those who have experienced domestic abuse recognise the tactics employed by perpetrators, the impact of abuse and how the brain responds, and to provide them with information about the support available to them now and in the future.
- Operation Encompass has moved from the MAART to the Specialist Support team and will be developed further to ensure that schools are made aware of the households where children are living with and witnessing domestic abuse and follow up contact will be made with the schools to understand what intervention has been undertaken with the child(ren).
- Regular meetings and some joint working has taken place with Community Safety – and several external funding bids have been submitted to support work in relation to accommodation, therapeutic support to children and Operation Encompass.

Future Activity

- As the team becomes more established work will be undertaken to review how it can work more effectively with partners to deliver the best possible outcomes for those affected by domestic abuse. This will align delivery with relevant organisations to avoid duplication and maximise the impact of available resources.
- The Team has agreed to offer placement opportunities to front line Social Work students in the Local authority to help raise awareness and improve joint working on cases involving children.
- Dame Vera Baird QC – Police and Crime Commissioner has written to the North East Regional Local Authorities to request support with the development of the original Operation Encompass. This is aligned to the new regional Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, which is broad ranging but does have a focus on domestic abuse and supports an ongoing regional Home Office funded Transformation project that Dame Vera Baird would like to implement 'Domestic Abuse: A Whole System Approach'. The Next Step' will consolidate this work and provide schools, children and domestic abuse victims with additional support. The proposal consists of 3 elements:
 - Taking a whole school approach and offering schools an educational programme for ALL staff within the school to give them the tools to spot the signs of domestic abuse and be better equipped to support children and signpost those children for better help
 - Offering PHSE inputs for children across key stages 1-4 which will deliver for, and alongside the schools using funded subject matter experts
 - Providing schools with dedicated school safeguarding liaison staff, funded by the project and employed by Northumbria Police, to offer school staff, parents and children a point of contact for advice and support.
- The team have also contributed to discussions around the implementation of a Court Independent Domestic Violence Adviser project led by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. This will improve the quality of input from victims to the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts and will link to the Domestic Abuse organisations from each of the 6 Local Authorities in the Police Force area.
- The team are exploring the development of two pieces of training for professionals: Victim Blaming and Gender Equality. Victim blaming will explore the question of why a victim stays and dispel some of the myths around this issue and the Gender Equality will explore the imbalance in society in relation to male/female roles and the holistic gender debate.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- (i) Discuss and comment on the contents of the report;
- (ii) Identify if there any issues/areas linked to Domestic Abuse that OSC would like to scrutinise in greater detail at a future Committee meeting.

- CIN / CP – Child In Need / Child Protection,
- CWL / DA / DAT – Care Wellbeing Learning / Domestic Abuse / Domestic Abuse Team,
- DHR – Domestic Homicide Review,
- IRAT – Integrated Referral Assessment Team

DRAFT Domestic Abuse Team Referral Pathways

- LAC / LP – Looked After Child / Lead Practitioner,
- MAART / MARAC – Multi Agency Adult Referral Team / Multi Agency Risk Assessment Team,
- R&A / SW – Referral & Assessment / Social Worker,
- TAF – Team Around the Family.

Self-Referrals

Family Friend Referrals

Partner Agency Referrals

Police Referrals

CWL Social Worker/Lead Practitioner Referrals (open cases escalating to medium/high risk)

Telephone Dedicated DAT Line 0191 4333333

Email domesticabuseteam@gateshead.gov.uk
domesticabuseteam@gateshead.qcsx.gov.uk

Email referral to DA Team including risk assessment and consent. Submit MARAC referral (high risk)

Automatic email notification of medium and high risk incidents ****currently only high risk****

LP/SW undertake risk assessment and submit 'Request for DA Support' on Carefirst

DAW assessed as standard risk

DAW assessed as medium or high risk

DAW confirmed as medium or high risk

Duty DAW contact family to gain consent

DAW confirmed as medium or high risk

No Children

Children

No Children

Children

No Children

Children

No Children

Children

****MAART or Victims First****
TBC

Early Help Targeted Family Support

Allocate for DA support
Notify Adult Social Care
Direct where additional support needs are identified

Allocate for DA support

Allocate for DA support
Notify Adult Social Care
Direct where additional support needs are identified

Allocate for DA support

Allocate for DA support
Notify Adult Social Care
Direct where additional support needs are identified

Allocate for DA support

Allocate for DA support and contribute to TAF, CIN, CP, LAC Plan or Adult Safeguarding Plan

****This is a risk high risk area. A robust response to standard risk cases with no children is imperative. The vast majority of DHR's have been assessed as standard risk.****

Not open to children's services

Notify R&A

Open to children's services

Notify SW/LP and contribute to TAF, CIN, CP or LAC plan

Not open to children's services

Referring agency to submit child concern to R&A

Open to children's services

Notify SW/LP and contribute to TAF, CIN, CP or LAC plan

Not open to children's services

IRAT Triage to agree joint response

Open to children's services

Notify SW/LP and contribute to TAF, CIN, CP or LAC plan