

## CRIME & DISORDER COMMITTEE

10 April, 2014

**Subject Heading:**

Review of services for victims of domestic violence

**CMT Lead:**

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**Policy context:**

This report relates to the councils strategic objective of valuing and enhancing the lives of individuals

### SUMMARY

This report provides a review of domestic violence services in Havering.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

That members note the contents of the report.

### REPORT DETAIL

#### Background

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

The definition acknowledges controlling and coercive behaviour prevalent in domestic violence. The definition, which is not a legal definition, includes 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

The Council's community safety team co-ordinates the Domestic Violence Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and, in conjunction with Housing and Adult Social Services, commissions a number of services to support victims of domestic violence and their families break the cycle of domestic abuse, through the legal process to prosecution of the perpetrator.

### **Domestic violence in Havering – the facts**

Domestic violence is prevalent in Havering and has a significant impact on the councils Living Ambition Vision to provide Havering residents with the highest quality of life. Domestic violence is under reported in Havering which follows national trends. Detailed below is a brief breakdown of domestic and sexual violence in Havering as of 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

### **Domestic and sexual violence**

<b>Havering</b>	<b>12 months to January 2014</b>	<b>12 months to January 2013</b>
Domestic violence	1,329	1,245
Rape	77	54
Other sexual	129	134

- For domestic violence this represents an increase of 6.7% in Havering and a Met-wide increase of 8.7%.
- For rape in Havering this represents a 42.6% increase, compared to a Met-wide increase of 22.8%.
- Other sexual offences across the borough saw a 3.7% decrease, compared to a 0.7% increase across London.

*(Source: Metropolitan Police March 2014)*

A more detailed breakdown of domestic violence in Havering can be found in the attached violence against women and girls strategic problem profile.

### **Current service provision**

Victims of domestic violence have access to the following services:

#### **Refuge**

Havering Women's Aid provide refuge accommodation for women fleeing domestic violence and abuse. Currently there are two refuges in Havering. Refuge one is based in an existing refuge building owned by Havering council. This refuge consists of 23 bed spaces. Refuge two is a newly converted building owned by Old Ford Housing Association. The building consists of fourteen self-contained flats, varying from a bedsit to one, two and three bedroom flats and has forty bed spaces. In 2012-13, one hundred and ten families were supported in refuge accommodation. In the first three quarters of 2013-14, eighty families have been supported in local refuge.

#### **Advocacy and support group service**

Havering Women's Aid are commissioned to provide a minimum of 204 two hour drop-in sessions in the borough. In addition to the drop in, the service is supported by an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor who provides two hours support to victims. The service also monitors clients accessing the service and will sign post victims to other support services including the referral of high risk victims to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). There has been a steady increase in the number of advocacy referrals. A breakdown of referrals can be found below:

Year	Number of Advocacy Sessions held	Number of referrals received for service
2010-11	204	250
2012-13	208	370
2013-14	156	156 (quarter 4 figures unavailable at time of writing report)

Havering Women's Aid support group focuses on improving victim awareness of domestic violence, improving confidence and independence. A referral breakdown for the last three years can be found below:

Year	Number of support groups held	Number of client attending support group
2010-11	4	61
2012-13	4	99
2013-14	3	75 (quarter 4 figures unavailable at time of writing report)

Both services support vulnerable women and girls aged 16 years and above who are experiencing violence. The service also safeguards children who are at risk of domestic violence. On an ad hoc basis the service will also support male victims of abuse.

Additionally, Havering Women's Aid deliver the Empowerment, Freedom and Community Groups courses for victims and their children. These courses are aimed at empowering victims of domestic abuse, improving self-esteem and confidence and exploring the impact of domestic violence on children. The organisation also fund holiday clubs for vulnerable children impacted by domestic violence.

As with all services of this nature, the uncertainty of future public funding remains a potential risk to future service provision. The Havering community Safety Partnership receives monitoring reports on the prevalence of DV in the borough so that resource allocation decisions can be taken. Funding is subject to meeting agreed MOPAC targets for this area of work.

### **Floating Support**

The floating support service provides emotional and practical help, advice and information to women and children experiencing domestic abuse who want to remain within their own home. In 2012-2013 the service provided 11,960 hours of floating support to one hundred and thirty one families.

### **Victim Support Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA)**

The Community Safety team and the Home Office jointly fund the IDVA post. The IDVA supports domestic abuse clients through the criminal justice process and

refers high risk cases of domestic violence to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference. In 2012-13 the IDVA supported sixty three clients through the criminal justice process and a further twenty-eight clients to MARAC. For the current year to date the IDVA has supported forty-nine high risk victims of domestic violence at MARAC which represents a 75% increase – given the percentage change it is anticipated that the IDVA's case load will continue to increase.

The IDVA has recently received CAADA sexual advocacy training and the borough now has its first CAADA accredited Independent Sexual Violence Advisor.

The IDVAs support through the criminal justice process is essential as the Crown Prosecution Service has stated the main reason for the collapse of domestic violence trials is victims withdrawing statements. From December 2012-November 2013, a total of thirty-five cases went to Crown Court, of these twenty were successful providing a conviction rate of 57.1%. At Magistrates Court two hundred and twenty-five cases went to court during the same period leading to one hundred and fifty seven successful prosecutions and a conviction rate of 69.8%. In the main the IDVA supports victims at Magistrates Court demonstrating the need for support for the more serious cases that are heard at Crown Court. The main reason IDVA support is not always available for Crown Court cases are delays and lengthy court waiting times.

The service provider has identified problems with the police referral system and a lack of funding as possible risks to future service provision. The post is funded by a £20k grant from the Home Office which is match funded by the Council. Future provision will be grant dependent.

### **Maternity Service IDVA**

The maternity service IDVA contract, based at Queens Hospital and commissioned by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), ends in March 2014. We understand from discussion with the CCG that there are no plans to re-commission the service – which potentially has implications for vulnerable pregnant women, especially, as pregnancy is often a time that domestic violence commences for the first time.

### **Age UK Havering Safe at Home Service**

The service, which is commissioned by the Council and is provided by Age UK, provides a 'target hardening' (securing of windows and doors) service, and remains free to victims of domestic violence. For the year to date forty-six homes of domestic violence victims have been target hardened.

### **East London Rape Crisis Centre**

Havering, along with Newham, Redbridge, Waltham Forest, Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Barking & Dagenham have contributed £20,000 each to funding the Centre. The service provides free confidential specialist help for women and girls who have been raped or experienced any other form of sexual violence. The service is for women and girls aged 14 years and above. In 2012-13, ninety-five Havering clients were referred to the service (some accessed this service in person, although the majority accessed it by telephone). For the financial year to date there have been one hundred and seventeen Havering clients referred to the service.

The Nia Project runs the Centre and also manages the Emma Project which provides refuge and floating support for women who are experiencing domestic

violence and have problematic substance misuse. Officers are continuing to monitor uptake of this service from Havering residents.

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014, MOPAC will take responsibility for the commissioning and funding of this service.

### **Specialist domestic violence worker in the Tier 3 team**

A specialist domestic violence worker is based in the Council's Tier 3 team within the Childrens, Adults and Housing Directorate, although is employed by Havering Womens Aid. Their role is to ensure the effective co-ordination of domestic abuse cases which have been identified by the Tier 3 team and to provide practical and emotional support for victims and their children. This post is currently vacant and it is hoped that it will be filled shortly.

### **Independent Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP)**

IDAP is a group work programme specially designed for men who have been abusive to spouses, partner and ex-partners. It is designed to challenge offender's patterns of thinking that underpin and maintain their violent and abusive behaviour.

For the financial year 2012-13, eleven Havering offenders have been referred to the Independent Domestic Abuse Accelerated programme (IDAPA). For the same period, there were twenty one successful completions of domestic violence related programmes, with a breakdown as follows: four completed one-to-one domestic abuse work, six completed Independent Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP), and eleven completed (IDAPA). The IDAPA programme has been removed in the current financial year and the IDAP rolled out in August 2013. Since July 2013 two men have successfully completed the IDAP programme. Due to difficulties earlier in the year Probation analysts have been unable to provide further data, this is now being reviewed and it is hoped that data will be available in the next month. This post is funded by London Probation Trust.

### **Women's Safety Officer – Probation**

The Women's Safety Officer provides contact and support to spouses and partners of men who are undertaking the IDAP. The Officer supported forty one victims of domestic violence in 2012-13. Currently the borough's statistics for the number of victims supported by the Officer have been clustered with Barking & Dagenham and a request has been made for Havering data. Probation have identified a lack of funding as the main risk to the continuation of the post.

### **MARAC**

The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) safeguards adult male and female victims of domestic violence and their children, manage offender behaviour and safeguard staff working with families. Since 2009 there has been a significant increase in the number of cases heard at MARAC – a breakdown of which can be found below:

Year	Number of MARAC cases	Number of vulnerable children in household
2013	185	301
2012	161	212
2011	118	155
2010	107	122
2009	8	7

The 2013 figures represent a 14.90% increase on the previous year. Referrals are being received from a wide range of agencies, however, this year there have been no MARAC referrals from Education, drug services, secondary acute trust and the voluntary sector. There have also been no referrals for the LGBT community which remains a hard to reach community along with BME residents. Since the data collection remit changed to include perpetrators and victims aged 16 and 17 years old, the MARAC has heard one case involving a 16 year old perpetrator. It should be noted that this perpetrator had previously attended MARAC prior to the data collection change. The MARAC self-assessment conducted by the Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse has identified a number of areas for improvement/recommendations. There are currently no financial implications for the Community Safety team as the co-ordination of the MARAC has been incorporated in to the Domestic Violence Officer's substantive duties.

### **Pan London Domestic Violence Projects**

A number of pan London domestic violence projects are available to Havering victims of domestic violence, funded by the London Borough Grants Scheme, organised by London Councils, to which the Council contributes funding to each year. These include:

- Thyme domestic and sexual violence project for female offenders
- Women in Prisons advice line
- London Violence Against Women and Girls consortium – provides preventative projects in schools, advice & counselling, domestic & sexual violence helplines, specialist refuge provision and support on harmful practices. To date the consortium has provided training for 11 professionals.
- Rights of Women help line provides free legal advice
- DVIP family safety project works with domestic violence perpetrators and their families
- Tender Education & Arts – provide workshops in schools on themes such as domestic and sexual violence, promotion of healthy relationships and warning signs. The project has worked in Gaynes School, Sander Drapers and Brittons. Work is due to commence in one primary school and one out of school setting.
- GALOP Domestic Abuse Project – supports gay men and women experiencing domestic violence through advocacy, counselling and practical help. Twenty staff attended a recent professionals training event.
- Sign Health supports deaf victims of domestic violence
- Women's Aid
- Eaves Housing for Women – provides support and emergency accommodation for trafficked women.
- Ashiana – provide support and emergency accommodation for women and children particularly from South Asian and Turkish communities. The service has provided workshops on healthy relationships and counselling for local girls and women.
- Women's Resource Centre – provide support and advice around sustainability, management and training for voluntary and community organisations working in the area of sexual and domestic violence services, including how to better meet the needs of men and boys.
- Pan London Domestic and Sexual Violence Help Line – two hundred and forty three Havering women have called the help line.

All London Councils projects are subject to funding. The current projects are funded from 2013-2015.

### **Counselling provision through Relate, Women’s Trust and Phoenix Counselling**

The Charity Relate have a network of counsellors trained for domestic violence referrals. The organisation does not receive funding from the council and the majority of clients self-refer or are recommended by other agencies. Most referrals are self-funded with the exception of a few that are funded through children’s social care. For year 2012-13 Relate counselled one hundred and thirty nine adult clients. This figure increased to one hundred and ninety clients in 2013-14.

The Women’s Trust provides free one to one counselling to women affected by domestic violence. In 2011-2012 there were eight referrals to the service, this increased to eighteen in 2012-13. For the financial year to date there have been eleven referrals.

Phoenix counselling advisory service is for 13-20 year olds based at Youth Zone. For 2013-13 the service received the following referrals:

		Intimate Partner		In the home		Relative, Friend or Stranger		Total
Year		Sexual abuse	Violence	Sexual abuse	Violence	Sexual abuse	Violence	
2012-13	Pregnant girls		3		1			4
	Girls	7	19	4	7	27	6	70
	Boys				1	1		2

### **Recommendations**

The Committee:

- Support Havering Community Safety Partnership to develop a Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy leading to the elimination of domestic violence.
- Note the loss of the maternity IDVA service at Queens Hospital and potential safeguarding implications for pregnant women and victims of female genital mutilation.
- Note the recommendations in the Violence Against Women and Girls strategic problem profile.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Financial implications and risks:**

MOPAC funding for the next three years has been agreed for Havering Women’s Aid Advocacy and Support Group. Future funding is dependent on achieving agreed MOPAC targets and therefore is not guaranteed.

Funding of the Rape Crisis Centre was topsliced from Havering’s MOPAC Crime Prevention grant for 2013-14. From next year, the service will be funded by MOPAC on a pan London basis.

**Legal implications and risks:**

The Council has a responsibility under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to address crime and disorder within the borough.

**Human Resources implications and risks:**

The Domestic Violence IDVA is employed by Victim Support London on an annual contract and therefore there are no HR implications for the Council if future funding is not secured.

The Tier Three worker is employed by Havering Women's Aid on an annual contract and therefore there are no HR implications for the Council if future funding is not secured.

**Equalities implications and risks:**

All commissioned services must ensure that as part of council contractual arrangements and corporate procurement processes they are compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty. This will be monitored through the equalities monitoring of those who access the service.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Violence against women and girls strategic problem profile (attached)