



CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE

REPORT

Subject Heading:

Domestic Violence in Havering

CMT Lead:

Ian Burns

Report Author and contact details:

Diane Egan
Community Safety Officer
01708 432927

Policy context:

Crime and Disorder Reduction

SUMMARY

The report highlights the level of domestic violence currently reported in Havering and the range of projects currently delivered across the Havering Community Safety Partnership

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members consider the findings of the DV JSNA

REPORT DETAIL

1. Background

In the UK the British Crime Survey has found that domestic violence accounts for between 16% and 25% of all recorded violent crime.

The World Health organisation has found that abused women are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, psychosomatic systems, eating problems and sexual dysfunction. The Department of Health states that between 50% and 60% of women mental health service users have experienced domestic violence, and up to 20% will be experiencing current abuse. It is estimated that 30% of domestic violence starts in pregnancy and domestic violence has been identified as a prime cause of miscarriage or still-birth and of maternal deaths during childbirth. Many

women use alcohol or drugs as a response to and a way of dealing with abuse. Women experiencing domestic violence are up to fifteen times more likely to misuse alcohol and nine times more likely to misuse other drugs than women generally.

The Department of Health estimates that

- at least 750,000 children a year witness domestic violence
- nearly three quarters of children on the 'at risk' register live in households where domestic violence occurs
- 52% of child protection cases involve domestic violence.

Previous Surveys in Havering would show that the picture is similar to the national perspective. Research has shown that children who live with domestic violence are at increased risk of behavioural problems and emotional trauma and mental health difficulties in adult life. Extensive research has shown that the link between child physical abuse and domestic violence is high, with estimates ranging between 30% to 66% depending upon the study (Hester et al, 2000; Edleson, 1999; Humphreys & Thiara, 2002). A recent survey by the NSPCC showed that one in five teenage girls has been hit by a boyfriend. Research into the needs of children affected by domestic violence found that their two primary needs are to be safe and to have someone to talk to. (Mullender, A et al. (2002) Children's perspectives on domestic violence.)

2. DV in Havering

Domestic violence (DV) is prevalent in the borough. We know that it has a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of victims and their children.

DV is defined as:

"Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This includes issues of concern to black and minority ethnic (BME) communities such as so called 'honour based violence', female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage."

The recent strategic assessment for Havering has found that between 1st of January 2011 and the 31st of December 2011 there were 1214 domestic violence offences within the Borough. Where the domestic violence is recorded as an offence three out of five (62%) are an assault (common assault, assault with injury, serious wounding or a sexual assault).

It is also to be expected that most victims are residents of Havering with only 7% being from other areas.

In one in five cases the victim is male. The recording of ethnicity by this crime system is quite poor but eight out of ten are white (83%). The current demographic of Havering will not be accurately known until late 2012 but it would appear that 'Afro-Caribbean' who account for one in ten cases (10%) may be over represented. It should be noted that in addition to the 1200 reported offences there are a further 2872 incidents recorded on the CRiS system where the incident was of a domestic nature but no statutory offence had been committed.

Domestic Violence Forum

The Domestic Violence Forum meets on a bi – monthly basis and is attended by a wide range of statutory and voluntary partners.

A dedicated action plan has been developed to address domestic violence. This is currently under review and a revised action plan will be presented to the DV forum in May. This work is coordinated and monitored by the Community Safety Service.

A Joint Strategic Needs assessment (JSNA) was completed in 2011 (see appendix 1). The JSNA made a number of recommendations which the DV forum will seek to address through the revised partnership action plan.

Having MARAC

The Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) aims to review and co-ordinate service provision in high-risk of harm domestic violence cases. The focus is to reduce repeat victimisation and preventing DV homicides. MARAC has a priority focus on victim safety with links to child protection and multi agency protection arrangements for violent and dangerous offenders. MARAC facilitates, monitors and evaluates effective information sharing to enable appropriate actions to be taken to increase public safety

Borough data for the Multi Agency Risk Assessment (MARAC) shows that for 2010/11:

- 109 cases were discussed
- These cases involved 112 children
- 13 cases were repeats
- 14 of these cases were from BME communities.

An Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (1 FT), funded jointly by LBH £18,000 and Home Office £18,000 till March 2013. The IDVA is provided by Victim Support to support the MARAC.

Having Women's Aid

Having Women's Aid are commissioned by the local authority to provide the refuge accommodation and the floating support service. This is a three year contact from October 2011. Having Women's Aid have 23 flats and are commissioned to provide 230 hours per week for the Refuge and Floating Support Service.

Having Women's Aid is also commissioned by the local authority to provide a one year drop in and support group. This contract is £11 000 for 2012/13 Having Women's Aid provide a DV Support Group which was jointly funded £4,000 LBH, and £ 4,000 Having Police to hold 40 support group sessions in 2011-2012.

In 2010/2011 Having Women's Aid supported 1192 women, 539 children and 20 men.

Referral to the service is via a helpline and Having Women's Aid provides a wide range of services such as:

- Refuge accommodation for twenty three families
- A Floating support service to Women and Men in the Community
- Children's services for the refuge
- Children's services for the community
- Drop In service
- Support Groups
- Counselling Service
- Helpline
- 24 hour on call for emergencies

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks: The Council Part funds the DV IDVA based in VS and the DV advocacy project at HWA. Funding has been secured to continue these projects until March 2013. The Council are unable to confirm whether further funding will be available in 20113-14

Legal implications and risks: Nil

Human Resources implications and risks: Nil

Equalities implications and risks: Nil

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. *Joint strategic Needs assessment (attached)*