

**ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE**

**PAPER NO: AP14/69**

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL  
24 OCTOBER 2014**

**SUBJECT: DOMESTIC ABUSE ACTION PLAN**

**SUMMARY:**

1. This report provides an update from Protecting Vulnerable People Directorate in relation to the progress made against the national Domestic Violence action plan. It highlights where good progress has been made and also where additional focus and effort is still required.
2. There are no significant financial implications to note within this report.
3. There are no significant risk implications within this report.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. The Accountability and Performance Panel is asked to note the progress made in respect of the national action plan and the work that is underway to address actions that remain incomplete.
2. It is recommended that the Accountability and Performance Panel be provided with a further update on progress in 3 months.

## 1. HMIC INSPECTION – SEPTEMBER 2013

1.1 In September 2013 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carried out an inspection of the effectiveness of Suffolk Constabulary to identify, investigate and manage the risks relating to domestic abuse. This was part of an all force inspection carried out in the latter part of 2013.

1.2 The inspection report made 9 Suffolk specific recommendations, which were to be addressed in a national action plan. The national action plan consisted of 20 distinct criteria, broken down further into 125 indicators. The 9 Suffolk specific recommendations were incorporated into the national action plan detailed at section 2 of this report.

1.3 The 9 recommendations are shown below, together with an update on action taken by the Constabulary.

### Recommendation 1

1.4 The Force should review the training currently provided to staff to ensure all staff understand coercive control, stalking, harassment and so-called honour-based violence. **Ongoing – part of 3 year roll out to all frontline staff**

### Recommendation 2

1.5 The Force should review how investigations are allocated in order that the most experienced and best-equipped investigators are assigned the investigations with the highest risk of harm, rather than simply the most serious crimes. **Complete – now to be incorporated into Force policy.**

### Recommendation 3

1.6 The Force should consider how multiple contacts with victims, by different officers or police staff and other agencies can be streamlined to provide a better service for the victim. **Still to be progressed – the Force will with new Independent Domestic Abuse Advice (IDVA) service and other voluntary organisation as well as police to ensure a more streamlined approach.**

### Recommendation 4

1.7 The Force should review the investigative process for domestic abuse to ensure that officers collect all available evidence to help build strong cases against perpetrators. **Ongoing – additional guidance will be issued regarding investigation, supervision and audit. Guidance from the CPS/ ACPO on investigation is now used across the Force.**

### Recommendation 5

1.8 The Force should review a number of standard risk incidents to confirm that they are graded appropriately. **Ongoing and forms part of and enhanced audit procedure being introduced.**

### Recommendation 6

1.9 The Force should review the process by which repeat standard risk cases are identified, and put in place arrangements for monitoring, to ensure risk assessments accurately reflect the level of risk, and consider how to identify better early warning signs of escalation. **Ongoing.**

### Recommendation 7

- 1.10 The force should review the means by which victims are updated if a perpetrator is released from custody and ensure that risk assessments and safety plans are reviewed at this stage. **Complete – process has been adopted within the Custody Investigation Unit (CIU) whilst further liaison takes place with the CPS to take this responsibility.**

### Recommendation 8

- 1.11 The Force should work with the PCC and partner agencies to increase the numbers of Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) available to work with victims in the county. **Ongoing.**

### Recommendation 9

- 1.12 The Force should publicise the role of the specialist team in order that all staff understand what it does and how it can help make victims safer. The force should clarify the role of the ISVA, where sexual violence has been part of a domestic abuse incident, and clarify who is responsible for dealing with the domestic abuse element of the crime. **Ongoing – safeguarding boards in police stations are now used to promote the work and identity of Domestic Abuse team.**
- 1.13 The report relating to Suffolk Constabulary stated *that victims of domestic abuse in Suffolk can have confidence in the service they receive from police*. Suffolk was one of only a handful of forces to obtain a positive inspection outcome.
- 1.14 As a result of this inspection The Head of Protecting Vulnerable People Directorate instigated an action plan to progress the areas raised by the HMIC as requiring attention. This has now been added to the National Domestic Violence action plan that was developed following the overall HMIC response to police effectiveness in this area.

## **2. PROGRESS AGAINST NATIONAL ACTION PLAN**

- 2.1 The national action plan consists of 20 distinct criteria further broken down into 125 indicators.
- 2.2 100% of the indicators have been assigned an owner. 34% have been completed. Only 17% (21) of the indicators remain a red (RAG indicator). 30% (38) are shown as complete.
- 2.3 The two criteria that have significant red indicators are those of *Performance Management* and *Specialist Capability*. Both these are subject to ongoing work to ensure they move to green. Whilst there are red indicators against other criteria they are single indicators rather than more systemic issues.

## **3. TIMESCALES FOR PROGRESS**

- 3.1 It is envisaged that 75% of actions will be completed within the next 3 months and 90% within 6 months.
- 3.2 The national action plan was returned to HMIC as requested and a copy has been sent to the OPCC.

3.3 The Detective Superintendent – Protecting Vulnerable People has responsibility for implementing the action plan in line with the agreed timescales. This will be overseen by the Assistant Chief Constable.

#### **4. PROGRESS AGAINST LOCAL ACTION PLAN**

4.1 There are 40 actions within the local action plan; many of these support the indicators within the national plan. Initially 63% (25) of these actions were rated as red and the remaining 37% (15) amber.

4.2 There is not one particular area that requires significant attention.

4.3 At the current time there are 23% (9) actions rated as red, 60% (24) as amber and 17% (7) as green.

#### **5. TIMESCALES FOR PROGRESS**

5.1 It is envisaged that 85% of actions will be rated green within 6 months.

5.2 The Detective Superintendent – Protecting Vulnerable People has responsibility for implementing the action plan in line with the agreed timescales. This will be overseen by the Assistant Chief Constable.

#### **6. OTHER AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT RELEVANT TO THE ACTION PLANS**

6.1 The Constabulary has written to Key Stakeholders with a view to enhancing the level of strategic governance and partner agency commitment to the MARAC process through the creation of a Steering Group.

6.2 Work is in progress with the Joint Integrated Offender Management (IOM) schemes to assess whether the cohort can be expanded to involve Domestic Abuse Offenders.

6.3 The Detective Superintendent - Protecting Vulnerable People is working to identify a suitable and effective tracking system to assist in managing the changing risks to victims of Domestic Abuse. This will enable Police and Partners to enhance the level of service and ongoing management on dates (birthdays, anniversaries etc.) when victims are most vulnerable.

6.4 The Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner's office (OPCC) is working with the Constabulary regarding the provision and funding of eight Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) to support the one in place (funded by the Constabulary). The OPCC is finalising arrangements with a suitable provider.

#### **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

7.1 The introduction of a risk management ICT solution will carry a financial implication. This is unknown at this time

#### **8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

8.1 The continued inability of partners to regularly to MARAC meetings has been raised with the Directors of both Children and Adult Services.

<b>ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)</b>	<b>PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'</b>
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	No
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	No
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	Yes
Have human resource implications been considered?	Yes
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	Yes
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	Yes
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	No
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	Yes