

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP16/7

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL -
26 FEBRUARY 2016**

SUBJECT: DOMESTIC ABUSE ACTION PLANS

SUMMARY:

1. This report provides an update from the Protecting Vulnerable People Directorate in relation to the progress made against the both national Domestic Violence action plan and the action plan developed from the University Campus Suffolk report into Domestic Abuse in Suffolk. It highlights where good progress has been made and also where additional focus and effort is still required.
2. The College of Policing training package has a cost implication.
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 both action plans 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 12 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 nine 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. From the national action plan Suffolk identified 40 actions that make up the local action plan, these include the nine Suffolk specific recommendations.
- 1.3 The nine recommendations are shown below, together with an update on action taken by the Constabulary. Seven of the nine are now complete, and the remaining two are progressing.

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.

Complete - The Constabulary has recently provided guidance to all front-line staff in relation to the new legislation on coercion and control that came into being on the 29th December 2015. There is already evidence that these offences are being considered by officers. The Constabulary are to deliver bespoke training of domestic abuse in early summer of this year to front-line staff and their supervisors. This '25 days' training programme aims to produce cultural change within the organisation to ensure a more victim centred approach to domestic abuse and other areas of vulnerability.

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 – Allocation of cases are reviewed at Area and Force Daily Management Meetings. Allegations are allocated according to risk rather than nature of injury. Oversight of High Risk cases at the Force Daily Management meeting ensures appropriate allocation.

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.

Continuing – the Force is now working effectively with new Independent Domestic Violence Advisory (IDVA) service and other voluntary organisations to ensure a more streamlined approach. Co-location of the Constabulary DA Team and the IDVA service will assist in coordinating processes. This action is duplicated within the University Campus Suffolk action plan. A full systems review of domestic abuse services and response in Suffolk, led by the Local Authority, has been commissioned and this issue will now be part of that review.

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.

Complete – Guidance from the CPS/ACPO on investigation is now used across the Force and there is additional clear guidance for the Custody Investigation Unit (CIU) in relation to domestic abuse investigations. A wider document providing guidance on investigation, supervision and audit has now been developed and specific guidance to supervisors has now been made available. Recent College of policing guidance has now also been circulated.

Recommendation 5

- 1.8 The Force should review a number of standard risk incidents to confirm that they are graded appropriately.

Complete – Audit process has been agreed with Domestic Abuse team supervisors. 30 standard risk incidents per month are reviewed. This was initially piloted in the East of the county and has proved to be an effective process.

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.

Complete - work with Joint Performance and Analysis Department (JPAD) has developed a process for identifying repeat victims, locations and offenders linked to domestic abuse. A filter for standard risk cases can be applied to identify three or more cases within an 18 month period – this will then trigger a secondary risk assessment based on the overall situation rather than as individual cases.

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.

Continuing – process has been adopted within the Custody Investigation Unit (CIU) whilst further liaison takes place with the CPS to take this responsibility. A review of this process previously shown as complete has indicated that further work is required. This will again be included within the full systems review and in addition consideration of how volunteers would be able to assist is being progressed.

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.

Complete – County IDVA service commenced in February 2015.

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.

Complete – Safeguarding Folders have now been placed in all police stations. These contain relevant information in relation to the DA team. The supervisors continue to provide inputs to local areas. The next step is to ensure that information is clearly and readily accessible through the intranet.

- 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 As at January 2016 78% of actions have been completed (up from 61% as at the last report). Only 2% now remain red.
- 2.3 Whilst there are red indicators they are single indicators rather than more systemic issues.

3. TIMESCALES FOR PROGRESS – NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

- 3.1 The addition of a Detective Inspector to lead on domestic abuse has greatly assisted in progressing these actions though the primary focus of this individual has been the action plan arising from the University Campus Suffolk report. Where actions overlap good progress has been made. Further progress is expected as continued focus on progressing both action plans continues. There are a total of 208 actions within these two action plans. A further review of progress will be undertaken in August 2016.
- 3.2 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.

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. At the outset 63% (25) of these indicators were rated as red the remaining 37% (15) amber.
- 4.2 There is not one particular area that requires significant attention.

4.3 In July 2015 there were 10% of indicators rated as red, this has now reduced to 7.5%. In July 2015 58% were shown as green and this has now increased to 78%.

5. TIMESCALES FOR PROGRESS – LOCAL ACTION PLAN

5.1 As with the national action plan, progress has been steady and the work taking place should see further conversion of Amber indicators to Green in the coming months. The target had been to achieve a 65% completion by October 2015. This has been achieved. The target is now to achieve 90% completion by August 2016.

6. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS SUFFOLK REPORT – ACTION

6.1 University Campus Suffolk (UCS) published 'Understanding domestic abuse in Suffolk - A study of the experiences of survivors' in March 2015. This was commissioned by the Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner. The report made a number of recommendations for the Police and the Criminal Justice System.

6.2 As a result of this, Suffolk Constabulary has produced an action plan setting out work that will be undertaken to improve the service in accordance with the recommendations (Appendix A).

6.3 The action plan lists actions under the following recommendation headings:-

- Reviewing the strategic integration of service provision
- Improving communication
- Making the Criminal Justice system more responsive
- Improving service delivery for survivors of Domestic Abuse
- Supporting Children and Young People

6.4 The action plan currently consists of 45 individual actions covering the first four of the above headings. The heading of Supporting Children and Young People will be discussed with the chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) with a view to seeking LSCB oversight support and oversight as these recommendations sit outside of direct constabulary influence.

6.5 Reviewing the Strategic Integration of Service Provision

6.6 There are 2 actions under this recommendation. Both are complete.

6.7 Improving Communication

6.8 There are 13 actions under this recommendation. Two are complete. A further two will be complete by the end of February 2016. Six further actions are now subject to activity by two separate Task and Finish groups. All other actions have been progressed.

6.9 Making the Criminal Justice System more Responsive

6.10 There are 21 actions within this recommendation. 11 are complete. The remaining nine actions are all being progressed.

6.11 Improving Service Delivery for Survivors of Domestic Abuse

6.12 There are nine actions under this recommendation. Three are complete. The remaining six actions are all being progressed.

6.13 Significant Developments

- 6.14 A dedicated Detective Inspector for Domestic Abuse has been appointed. The creation of this role has been possible through the ongoing re-structure within the Protecting Vulnerable Persons Directorate.
- 6.15 A strategic board to oversee the ongoing development of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) has been set up. A chair has been appointed and an initial action plan created.
- 6.16 Work is ongoing to better align MARAC processes with those of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. This will be supported by the co-location of the police Domestic Abuse Team supervisor and Independent Domestic Violence Advisory (IDVA) Service representative within the MASH.
- 6.17 To further assist streamlining of domestic abuse services February will also see the co-location of the IDVA service with the police Domestic Abuse teams. All vetting, security and access issues have been addressed.
- 6.18 The Constabulary, supported by the OPCC, have commissioned the College of Policing to deliver a training package on Domestic Abuse. It is hoped this will result in permanent cultural changes to the way domestic abuse is managed within the Constabulary.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Cost of College of Policing Training package.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 8.1 No further implications or risks identified.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
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