

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP17/31

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL -
16 JUNE 2017**

**SUBJECT: EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF DOMESTIC ABUSE (DA)
MATTERS TRAINING**

SUMMARY:

1. This report provides an update against the recommendations made during the evaluation of the impact of the Domestic Abuse Matters Training which took place in October 2016.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Accountability and Performance Panel is asked to note the contents of this report.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides updates against the recommendations made during the evaluation of the impact of the Domestic Abuse (DA) Matters Training which took place in 2016.

2. RESPONSE

2.1 Recommendations in relation to attitudes of first responders

- Victim focus groups should be held with victims who have been dealt with by Suffolk constabulary since the training was rolled out. This would enable comparisons to be made regarding victim feedback on the service that was provided and how the training has affected it.

2.1.2 Update

- 2.1.3 Surveying of victims of DA has historically been a difficult and complex area and one that requires much thought to ensure it is approached sensitively and safely. The Home Office have instructed all forces to undertake victim surveys in this area, and the Joint Performance and Analysis Department (JPAD) is leading on the development of this process for both Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies. It is considered to be most appropriate to allow this work to continue and ensure that the appropriate information is sought from victims through this route.

2.2 Recommendations in relation to knowledge of first responders

- All new recruits of first responders should receive the DA Matters training to ensure that the key messages and improvement in attitudes and knowledge continue throughout the force.
- Input should be provided to officers and staff responsible for investigating crime to develop knowledge of what is required to ensure a prosecution for coercive control.
- SafeLives should consider the use of male victims, as well as homosexual couples within their role plays and description of domestic abuse, to ensure that the description of victims of domestic abuse is representative of the variety of victims.
- Suffolk Constabulary should work to increase the knowledge of the force around the role of the DA team. This would address HMIC's (2014) recommendation.
- As part of their monthly requirements, DA champions should be crewed with first responders in order to observe how they deal with domestic abuse incidents. This will allow the DA champion to identify first-hand the standard that responders are providing to victims, as well as if positive attitudes were being put into action and any areas which are needed for improvement.

2.2.1 Update

- 2.2.2 Suffolk Constabulary now owns the licence for DA Matters training and this training is being provided to all new recruits into the Constabulary through Learning & Development programmes.

- 2.2.3 From the initial training a number of detective officers were included, and there are now plans in place to ensure an input on investigating coercive control is delivered through future detective training days.
- 2.2.4 The work and remit of the DA team featured in an article in Constables County. Within the changes to the Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) operating model the domestic abuse teams have been located within the main police stations so increasing the opportunity for interaction with front line officers. The DA team are also now also located within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- 2.2.5 Since initial roll out the DA champions have completed further refresher training where their roles and responsibilities have been reviewed. With the current resourcing challenges across response policing it has not been possible to progress some of the intended work with champions. This remains an area of development. The wider role and ownership of champions is still being developed to ensure their influence across the front line.

2.3 Recommendations in relation to DA incidents

- Further analysis is needed in relation to trends in recording of DA crime and non-crime. Between the training being rolled out and the deadline for the evaluation, there was only three months to allow for data analysis. This did not provide enough time for the effects of the training to be embedded and an effect to be seen in the DA crime figures. It is recommended that analysis should be carried out next year to compare, year on year the impact of the training.

2.3.1 Update

- 2.3.2 JPAD will provide an update on the position in relation to crime and incident recording in August 2017 performance reports. Although this will not provide evidence of the direct impact of the training this will enable a fuller understanding of trends since the training was completed.

2.4 Recommendation in relation to quality of investigations

- Station Clerks at Ipswich, Bury St. Edmunds and Lowestoft should be provided training in DA in order to ensure that victims of DA who attend the stations are dealt with in a compassionate and empathetic manner.
- Feedback should be obtained from first responders who take victim statements to ascertain if they feel better equipped to obtain information from victims to formulate their statements after the training.
- Body Worn Video (BWV) should be rolled out to response officers when available. As part of the roll out of the BWV, officers should be reminded of the importance of using a BWV to capture evidence when dealing with domestic abuse incident.

2.4.1 Update

- 2.4.2 Whilst training of Public Access Officers would have benefit, there are very few victims of domestic abuse who make contact with the police through this means and as such the prioritisation of providing DA Matters training to Public Access officers is low.

- 2.4.3 Further analysis of the progress made as a result of the DA Matters Training would be beneficial and help inform the Constabulary as to the extent of the cultural

changes towards responding to and managing domestic abuse. This will be progressed through the Domestic Abuse Delivery Board.

- 2.4.4 Body Worn Video deployment will predominantly be managed over three phases, the first of which will see cameras personally issued to all frontline roads policing officers, firearms and dog units and dedicated licensing team officers from the end of May 2017. Phase two of the roll-out will see devices given to Sergeants and PCs in Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies County Policing Commands before the end of the year. Training has commenced May 2017 for super users. The Protecting Vulnerable People Department has discussed the capture of evidence at reported incidents of DA with Learning & Development with a view to including this within training.

2.5 Recommendations in relation to confidence of first responders

- First responders who completed the training should be contacted via email in May 2017 to measure confidence levels of dealing with violent, non-violent DA, as well as supporting a victim through police prosecution. This should be compared to confidence levels straight after the training to ascertain if confidence has deteriorated over time. If so, refresher training should be considered to improve confidence.
- The work that DA champions are completing should be assessed in order to measure if confidence of first responders has improved as a result of having a DA champion who they can approach and will help to develop their ability to deal with DA.

2.5.1 Update

- 2.5.2 Further surveying and analysis of the progress made as a result of DA Matters Training will be managed through the Domestic Abuse Delivery Board.

2.6 Recommendations in relation to deterioration of knowledge and attitudes over time

- For future training of DA champions, if nominations by trainers are used, the first responders should be informed that they have been nominated and what the role will entail prior to them attending the training.
- In order to meet the criteria initially set out by the PCC, 26 additional first responders should be trained as DA champions.
- To ensure that the role of the DA champion is successful across Suffolk Constabulary, the importance of the Champions role should be emphasised.

2.6.1 Update

- 2.6.2 Where future champions are identified, then they will be made fully aware of the requirements of the role prior to further training.

- 2.6.3 Whilst it is acknowledged that the numbers of champions falls slightly below the recommended number, the Constabulary has over 100 current champions which provides an effective spread across all business areas.

- 2.6.4 The current cohort of champions have been provided with a refresher session. A senior manager's awareness workshop has been arranged for June 2017 and delivered by SafeLives to further emphasise the importance of a champion

network. Whilst PVP have provided the leadership in establishing the DA champions there is a need to consider the longer term ownership and coordination.

2.7 Recommendations in relation to coercive control

- Officers should be provided with further information, in order to assist them in being able to complete DA and coercive control prosecutions without the support of the victim. Officers should continue to be encouraged to gather as much independent evidence as possible to ensure that cases can continue without the victims support if they chose to withdraw.
- The outcomes of coercive control crimes should continue to be monitored to ensure that prosecutions are made against perpetrators. If coercive control crimes do not see an increase in charges, additional work will be needed between the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and Suffolk constabulary, with consideration given to a training programme for both CPS and Suffolk constabulary to ensure both organisations are working in unison.
- The number of coercive control crimes which have victim support per policing command should be monitored due to insufficient data to enable comparisons to be made before and after the training. It is important to ensure that all three policing commands are doing all they can to support victims of coercive control.
- Training was rolled out to Magistrates across Suffolk in 2016, in order to educate magistrates on DA and the impact that the type of sentencing they provide has on victims. It is recommended that this work is evaluated, in order to determine the impact it has had.
- The DA matters training should be rolled out to partner agencies involved with DA victims and perpetrators in order to raise awareness of coercive control perpetrators ability to manipulate professionals. This would assist in providing the support needed for victims and their families.

2.7.1 Update

2.7.2 The use of National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) and CPS investigative guides provide officers with direction in relation to evidence gathering for domestic abuse. The addition of body worn video will further enhance gathering of quality evidence that will also support offender centric prosecutions.

2.7.3 Domestic abuse performance is embedded into to force level performance meetings.

2.7.4 The Constabulary provided training to Magistrates across Suffolk but does not have the resources in order to evaluate the impact of this.

2.7.5 Suffolk County Council are in discussion with SafeLives to provide DA Matters training across the wider DA partnership.

2.8 Recommendations in relation to risk assessments

- Consultation should be held with the DA team and officers in the East in order to determine if they felt that the DA Matters training influenced their assessment of risk for DASH booklets. This is a result of a significant increase in the number of high risk assessments which were completed after the training in the East.

- Further quality assurance and audit looking at consistency across other agencies and third sector is needed to ascertain why there is a higher level of consistency for high risk assessments in the South and West, whereas there is a higher level of consistency for medium risk assessment in the East.
- The number of risk assessments which are completed will be monitored through the Constabulary's performance framework. All DA crimes and non-crimes should have an initial risk assessment completed. Problem areas should be identified, so interventions can be put in place to ensure that DASH booklets are being completed.

2.8.1 The analysis of domestic abuse risk assessment is being reviewed as stated within previous recommendations relating to analysis of domestic abuse trends.

2.9 Recommendations in relation to victim satisfaction

- Once BWV has been rolled out to officers, it is recommended that officers' use of them should be evaluated to determine if they have had a positive impact on crime investigation, especially domestic abuse.
- Further work is needed to identify why victims of DA do not feel, or are not being, communicated with post the initial contact. The ADR 444 (victim satisfaction survey) should help to measure victim satisfaction in terms of follow up contact.
- Officers attending domestic abuse incidents should be encouraged to ask victims about previous abuse, as well as informing victims about the coercive control legislation that was introduced in December 2015. Any future DA training should reinforce the importance of these key themes when attending a domestic incident. This may assist in collecting evidence of a case, as well as ensuring that victims are aware of what constitutes a crime.

2.9.1 Update

2.9.2 Body Worn Video training has commenced May 2017 for super users followed by a phased rollout during 2017. Point 2.4.4 earlier in this report refers.

2.9.3 There is a need to review outcome data in relation to domestic abuse cases to better understand issues such as victim attrition and this will be developed to support force performance meetings and the better understanding of domestic abuse across Suffolk. There is also an opportunity to consider data from other partners to look at victim's attitudes to why they do or do not support prosecutions.

2.9.4 The DASH form requires officers to ask victims about previous abuse.

2.9.5 A Domestic Abuse Scrutiny Panel is being developed to understand the victim journey and to critically analyse the performance of investigations.

2.10 Recommendations in relation to cost benefit analysis and victim support for police prosecution.

- Data in relation to repeat victims and the number of supported prosecutions should be monitored in order to enable cost and benefits of the training to be translated in the long term.
- Further analysis at a later date is required to determine if there has been an increase in the amount of victims of DA who support police prosecution. This is due to the translation of the improve attitudes, knowledge and level of

confidence taking longer than three months to embed and have an effect on victims.

2.10.1 Update

2.10.2 The commissioning of further analysis into the long term cost benefits and in regards to the number of victims who support police prosecutions will be managed through the DA Delivery Board.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 There is much anecdotal evidence to suggest that Domestic Abuse Matters training has had a significant positive impact on the way that front line officers respond to domestic abuse and recognise elements of coercion and control. Performance data appears to support a better understanding of coercion and control but further short term and longitudinal analysis is required to fully understand the impact of the training from recording to prosecution.

3.2 SafeLives have been provided with a copy of the evaluation report. The positive engagement by the Constabulary has led to continued partnership with SafeLives who remain engaged with the Constabulary on a number of levels and with the wider Suffolk Domestic Abuse Partnership.

3.3 It is anticipated that the SafeLives 'One front Door' pilot outcomes will be available in early 2018. A holistic understanding of all the variety of recommendations from a number of sources can then be progressed.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications to report at this time.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

5.1 There are no other implications or risks to report at this time.

| 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 – as no financial implications noted |
| Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate? | No – there are no issues likely to impact on either diversity or human rights implications |
| Have human resource implications been considered? | Yes – no HR implications identified. |
| Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan? | Yes – the report support Objective 3 Action 7 'evaluation of DA Matters' |
| Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation? | Yes – DA team involved; D/Supt PVP; JPAD; SafeLives |
| Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed? | No – there are no issues likely to impact on media interest. |
| Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission? | Yes |