

By: Clive Bainbridge, Director of Community Safety, KCC

To: Safer and Stronger Communities Group.

Date of Meeting: 4th March 2010

Subject: Domestic Abuse Executive Group Update

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This report provides an update regarding the provision of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) following the meeting of the Domestic Abuse Executive Group on 15th December 2009.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following on from the Funding Assessment Report completed by the Kent and Medway Domestic Violence Strategy Group (KMDVSG) in January 2009 that identified a funding shortfall in terms of Domestic Abuse of around £2.4m, The Safer & Stronger Communities Group decided at their July 2009 meeting that the provision of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) was the key priority with an overall funding requirement estimated at £1.1million.
- 1.2 The SSCG decided to set up The Domestic Abuse Executive Group to take forward this issue.
- 1.3 The Domestic Abuse Executive Group met on the 15th December and was well attended by key statutory partner agencies and discussed a variety of options to sustain and develop IDVA services across Kent and Medway.

2. Summary of Discussion

- 2.1 KCC's Community Safety Unit reported back on their recent audit of domestic abuse service provision; this identified that from the responses they had received £6.4 million was being spent on service provision, of which £5.4 million was financed by Kent Police and KCC Supporting People.

- 2.2 Some CDRPs did not respond to the audit as they felt that their spend was being scrutinised and other areas such as social services and education were unable to split their domestic abuse spend from their general service delivery spend.
- 2.3 Using the Home Office Ready Reckoner Tool to calculate spend on domestic abuse and sexual violence, the estimated actual cost to Kent and Medway is:
- £317m Total
- Of which
- £68m Physical and mental health care costs
 - £43m Criminal justice costs
 - £8m Social services costs
 - £197m Housing, civil legal, employment costs
- 2.4 The Group felt that the way forward was associated with invest to save activity and felt that there was capacity across the various large statutory agencies to identify resources for IDVAs, examples considered included: housing staff, health visitors, schools family liaison officers, community wardens, social workers etc.
- 2.5 All agencies present agreed to consider whether they could provide funds and/or existing staff posts to resource countywide IDVA services and report back at the next meeting.
- 2.6 It was also agreed that Kent Police and Kent Probation, both of whom have experience in the application of lean systems, would brief the next meeting of the Domestic Abuse Executive Group on the Lean process.
- 2.7 If accepted by the agencies represented it is planned to hold a Lean Event to assess whether the processes relating to dealing with domestic abuse are efficient and effective and to identify any cost savings and refocusing of resources to deliver IDVA services across the county.

3. Current IDVA Funding Shortfall for 2010/11

- 3.1 Whilst the medium/long term goal is to secure sustainable funding for enhanced IDVA services across the county, currently 4 existing IDVA posts do not have funding for all of 2010/11:
- 1 post – based at the Maidstone SDVC has a current funding shortfall of **£13,000** for 2010/11.
 - 3 posts – Kent Advocacy Service (covering Shepway, Dover and Ashford) have no funds currently secured for 2010/11 and require **£151,000** to continue their services beyond March 2010.

- 3.2 It is likely that GOSE funding will be received during 2010/11 to support IDVA services within Kent, if awarded at the same level as previous years this will be £40,000, however it is unlikely GOSE will confirm this allocation before mid/late March.
- 3.3 Kent Police, Kent Criminal Justice Board and KCC have agreed to find the remaining funds outstanding to support IDVA services to cover the shortfall for 2010/11.

4 Audit Commission & Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)

- 4.1 The Audit Commission is currently engaged in work to consider the inclusion of Domestic Abuse within the CAA. They are now at the stage of collating research on what works to reduce domestic abuse and amongst other areas, they have added Kent to their research base for this work and plan to set up meetings with various stakeholders within Kent to discuss this further.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 Work is currently underway to identify sustainable funding to maintain and develop IDVA services across Kent and Medway.

7 Recommendations

- 7.1 To support plans for a multi-agency domestic abuse Lean event.
- 7.2 To note the likely inclusion of domestic abuse as a theme within future Comprehensive Area Assessments.

Action or Decisions required: For Information and Decision

As detailed in Recommendations 7.1 – 7.2.

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