

Kent County Council Select Committee Report: Preventing and Responding to Domestic Abuse in Kent

Planned Action to Address Recommendations

- Given that many of the 14 recommendations within the report necessitate multi agency and joint commitment, the Select Committee report will be presented to the multi-agency Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy Group (KMDASG) at its next meeting early in 2013 where it will be proposed that a task and finish group be established which will be responsible for addressing the recommendations set out within the report.
- Arrangements will be made to bring to the attention of and raise discussions with those individual agencies or particular “safeguarding” Boards that are indicated within the report, e.g. recommendations R1, 2, 9, 12 etc. It will be requested that these agencies/Boards will feed into the report back system of the task & finish work group of the KMDASG as above.
- It is anticipated that this task & finish group will present an interim report back to the County Council, Cabinet and Corporate Board commencing Spring 2013 (and also to the next suitably appropriate meetings of the Kent Community Safety Partnership and the Kent Criminal Justice Board) on progress against the recommendations.
- KCC Community Safety Unit will be responsible for drafting appropriate correspondence (R12) to the Teaching Agency and Department of Education.

Current Activity

Strengthening the Multi-Agency Response – recommendations R1 – R3

- Lessons learnt via the multi agency Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) process focus on ensuring that there is a better co-ordinated multi-agency response to domestic abuse. Any gaps identified between agencies and service providers are rectified including information sharing between and within agencies.
- This work is being driven forward by a multi-agency DHR Steering group made up of senior officers of all the statutory agencies, including Health and Police, and reports back to the Kent Community Safety Partnership.
- The Kent & Medway Domestic Abuse website was launched on the 28 November 2012 to mark the start of a promotional campaign aimed at raising awareness and the accessibility of domestic abuse support services. Information about the website is being distributed across the county; to all libraries, GP surgeries, early years and community centres by Community Wardens and the Police to ensure that the message reaches as many people as possible.
- Concerns around resourcing One Stop Shops were raised with Senior Officers of all appropriate agencies at the last Kent Community Safety Partnership held on 1st November 2012. It was requested that these agencies will report back on progress regarding resourcing one stop shops to the KCSP at its next meeting in Feb. 2013.

Achieving Sustainable and Equitable Services - recommendation R4

- Work has commenced to establish a centrally commissioned, “pooled budget” system for resourcing IDVA services across the county. This work is being led by the Kent Criminal Justice Board and Kent Community Safety Partnership. All associated public services (Police, Probation, Health and both tiers of Local Authorities including Medway) have been circulated with a detailed business case and have been asked by the Chair of the KCJB to confirm, or not, their commitment for funding for the next three years. It is reported that currently 50% of those agencies contacted have committed funds although not for a 3 year period.
- Potential contributors to this joint commissioning proposal and service providers have been invited to attend a scoping event on 11th December to discuss the potential changes to resourcing IDVAs with a view to commissioning commencing in April 2013.

Higher Priority, Greater Awareness - recommendations R5 – R7

- The Kent Community Safety Partnership has Domestic Abuse as one of its six key priorities in its statutory Community Safety Agreement. This priority has been reflected in the 12 local Community Safety Partnerships action plans across the county.
- The recommendation, R5, will be raised with the Cabinet Member for CCS at his next briefing session in December.
- Furthermore, discussions have commenced with the Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner in Kent regarding the importance of tackling Domestic Abuse.

Planned Future Activity

Shifting Accountability recommendations R8 – R10

- The Select Committee recommendations will be tabled, at the earliest possible time (for discussion and action both externally and internally) at the following forums;

Kent Community Safety Partnership
Kent & Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy Group
Kent Criminal Justice Board
KCC CMT & DMTs

Breaking the Cycle recommendations R11 – R14

- The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Website will have a section of resources, advice and information specifically dedicated to young people and will be further developed over the coming year.
- Informal discussions are being arranged with Project Salus (Safe Schools) to consider delivering an awareness programme in Kent's schools.