

Domestic Abuse Strategy for Central Bedfordshire Council

PURPOSE

1. To provide the Board with an update on the Council's response to domestic abuse through progress on the development of a Domestic Abuse Strategy for Central Bedfordshire Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. For Board Members to consider how they can champion the Domestic Abuse Strategy.

PUBLIC/EXEMPT: Public

CONTACT: Jeanette Keyte, Head of Community Safety, Central Bedfordshire Council

BACKGROUND

3. Central Bedfordshire Council is a key partner in supporting victims of domestic abuse in Central Bedfordshire. Domestic abuse is cross-cutting in that it can affect anyone, resulting in directorates across the Council providing services to support victims and their families.
4. To deliver the right outcomes, and support a multi-agency approach, the Council is developing a Council Domestic Abuse Strategy and action plan that will be implemented from 1 September 2016.

The Council has worked with SafeLives, a national charity, to develop the strategy and action plan. Since SafeLives were established 10 years ago they have led on transforming the response to domestic violence and abuse by providing practical, risk-led solutions.

5. The strategy has been developed in two stages. The first stage had an internal focus, working across Council directorates, to identify how best to progress a robust co-ordinated strategy for the Council, identifying key themes for development and providing proposals for work needed to develop those themes.
6. Stage two involved a multi agency partner workshop, held in December 2015, to consult and test the Council's draft strategic objective themes:

- Leadership & Governance
- Referrals & Care Pathways
- Early Identification & Prevention
- Commissioning & Funding
- Learning & Development

Appendix A lists partner organisations invited to the event.

7. Attendees reviewed current provision and made suggestions about actions which they felt needed to happen urgently, as well as support they or their agency could provide. Of the five themes considered at the workshop partners prioritised the three themes below:
 - Referrals and care pathways
 - Early identification and prevention
 - Commissioning and funding.
8. The feedback and offers of support from the workshop have been incorporated in the development of a draft strategy and action plan. Further work is now underway to refine the action plan and align it with relevant business plans and strategies of statutory Boards including the Safeguarding Children Board, Safeguarding Adults Board, Health & Well Being Board and Community Safety Partnership. A Domestic Abuse Performance Dashboard report is also being developed for the Council to monitor the delivery of the outcomes in the strategy.
9. The Councils Corporate Management Team will review the document in June with a view to implementing the strategy in September.
10. Once the strategy is finalised it will be shared with the Board and an update on the strategy will be considered by Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board on 28 June.