

## **Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board**

**10<sup>th</sup> December 2014**

### **Update on Recommendations from Scrutiny Review of Domestic Homicide Reviews and Scrutiny Review of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership (DASP) Delivery Plan Analysis and Best Practice**

#### **1. Summary Statement**

- 1.1 Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board undertook two reviews in 2013-14 as part of its work programme on Domestic Violence and Abuse. This report provides a progress update on the implementation of recommendations from those reviews.
- 1.2 The first review was on Domestic Homicide Reviews, the report from which was received by Neighbourhood Scrutiny Board in December 2013 and the second was an analysis of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Delivery Plan (DASP) and best practice which was received by Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board in June 2014.

#### **2. Background information**

- 2.1 The recommendations from the report on Domestic Homicide Reviews are outlined below with an update provided for each one:

##### **Safer Sandwell Partnership**

1. That the Director – Legal and Governance Services updates the Safer Sandwell Partnership Policy on Domestic Homicide Reviews to reflect the amendments required in line with the Statutory Guidance published by the Home Office.

***Update: Action completed. The Policy on Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) has been reviewed and updated to reflect Statutory Guidance from the Home Office. The updated policy was approved by Safer Sandwell Partnership Board on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2014.***

2. That the Safer Sandwell Partnership nominates a lead Board member for each recommendation contained within a Domestic Homicide Review for the purpose of championing and driving forward implementation.  
***Update: Action completed. Reports from three DHR cases were presented to an Extraordinary Meeting of Safer Sandwell Partnership Board on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2014. Lead SSP Board Members were agreed for each recommendation in those cases. Recommendations from those cases have all been implemented. This process will be implemented for all future recommendations identified in new DHRs.***

### **Tracking and Monitoring of Recommendations**

3. That the Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group, develops an audit tool designed to monitor and evaluate compliance of the Local Authority and partner agencies with their specific and general duties in respect of domestic abuse and the protection of victims and their families and that the audit tool also seek to ensure that the voice of victims is heard.  
***Update: Action underway. Discussions have been held with the Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) to amend its Section 11 Audit tool for use by the DASP for the purpose of auditing the quality of council and partner agencies' response to domestic abuse. Section 11 audits are a statutory requirement of SSCB partners, and whilst domestic abuse audits are not a statutory requirement, it is anticipated that adding it on to the Section 11 audit (albeit with the caveat that it is not a compulsory part of the Section 11), would make it more likely for organisations to see it as part of their safeguarding responsibilities and complete the audit. Virtual College have been commissioned to amend the existing Section 11 audit tool with a set of DVA standards agreed by DASP and this work is underway.***
4. In relation to (3) above, that results of audit investigations be reported to the DASP and its sub-group structure to ensure that desired outcomes are achieved and lessons are learned from domestic homicide reviews.  
***Update: Audit investigations will commence once the Audit tool (see Recommendation 3) is ready for use. There will need to be briefings and training undertaken on the use of the tool by partners for DVA audits. It is recommended that Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel should receive a further report from the DASP on the findings of DVA audit investigations once audits have been completed by partner agencies and reviewed by DASP.***

### **Independent Management Reviews (IMR)**

5. That the guidance contained in IMRs be further reviewed by the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board, particularly in relation to the formulation of recommendations by IMR Report Authors.  
***Update: Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board has not yet reviewed the guidance contained in IMRs and the Board may want to consider whether it still wishes to undertake this work. No new DHRs which require IMRs have commenced since the review of DHRs was undertaken.***
  
6. That the Director – Neighbourhoods ensures that outcomes from the review referred to in (5) above, are implemented.  
***Update: See update in Recommendation 5 above.***
  
7. That the Director – Neighbourhoods ensures that briefing sessions for IMR Report Authors be held for every DHR and Near Miss Case for the purpose of:- providing a case overview; discussion on the terms of reference; clarification on requirements of an IMR; guidance on SMART recommendations.  
***Update: Briefing meetings have been held with IMR authors for 3 DHR cases and 1 near-miss case. There have been no further DHRs requiring IMRs since the Scrutiny review of this work (a DHR which commenced in November 2014 will not require any IMRs to be produced). However, briefing sessions for IMR authors will be routinely provided for any new DHRs in future where IMRs are required.***
  
8. That the Director – Neighbourhood Services ensures that further support be offered to IMR report authors, either from the Chair of the DHR Review Panel or from Council support officers, in order to provide feedback on draft versions of IMRs and assistance with the formulation of recommendations.  
***Update: No new IMRs have been required since the review was completed. However, this recommendation will be implemented when IMRs are required in any future new DHRs.***
  
9. That the Director – Neighbourhoods ensures that briefing sessions are held for IMR authors at the conclusion of the case to ensure that there is opportunity to discuss the recommendations and provide feedback.  
***Update: Since the Review was undertaken, briefing sessions for IMR authors have been provided at the conclusion of DHRs 2 and 3 (DHR 1 had been completed some time before the Review was undertaken) and a briefing session has been offered for Case 4. Briefings for IMR authors will be routinely offered at the conclusion of all future DHR cases.***

10. That the Domestic Homicide Review Panel requires every IMR author to attend a meeting of the Review Panel to discuss the IMR content and allow for emphasis of particular elements, in order to assist the Review Panel in holding IMR authors to account and in providing challenge on IMRs.

***Update: No new DHRs which require IMRs have commenced since this Review was undertaken. However, all IMR authors will be required to attend a meeting of the Review Panel for any future DHRs to be undertaken.***

### **Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership (DASP)**

11. That the Domestic Homicide Review Standing Panel be a sub-group of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership, reporting directly to the Safer Sandwell Partnership when determining whether a domestic homicide meets the criteria for a review.

***Update: The Domestic Homicide Review Standing Panel (DHRSP) is a sub-group of the DASP and the Chair provides reports to each DASP meeting, and as required to SSP Board. DHRSP also routinely holds a meeting with the Chair of SSP Board when new cases arise to determine whether a domestic homicide meets the criteria for a review.***

12. That the Chair of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership reviews the membership and Chairing arrangements for the Domestic Homicide Review Standing Panel in order to ensure more robust governance arrangements.

***Update: Chairing arrangements have been reviewed and DCI Jane Parry was appointed as Chair of DHRSP. DCI Parry is a member of DASP representing Sandwell Local Policing Unit and is also the Vice Chair of DASP. Membership of the DHRSP has also been reviewed at the last meeting in October 2014 and the terms of reference updated.***

13. That the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership establishes sub-groups to support the delivery of the domestic abuse strategy and to support the monitoring and delivery of recommendations from Domestic Homicide Reviews and the implementation of lessons learned.

***Update:***

***The following DASP sub-groups are currently in place:***

- ***Domestic Homicide Review Standing Panel***
- ***Quality & Audit sub-group***
- ***Learning & Development sub-group***
- ***Domestic Violence campaign group***

***The Domestic Homicide Review Standing Panel (DHRSP) was established in December 2012 to have an oversight of Domestic Homicide Reviews in the borough; ensure recommendations are implemented and lessons learnt and disseminated. This group reports both to DASP on a regular basis and to SSP Board as required.***

***The Quality and Audit (Q&A) sub-group and Learning & Development (L&D) sub-group were established in March 2014 to improve the partnership's governance and delivery arrangements for domestic abuse. This was in response to the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board review on Domestic Homicide Reviews which recommended the establishment of these two new groups. The purpose of the Q&A sub-group is to review and audit the quality of domestic abuse work across partner agencies; seek assurances that victims of domestic abuse and their families are being effectively safeguarded in Sandwell and that work with domestic abuse perpetrators is effective.***

***The purpose of the L&D sub-group is to undertake a Training Needs Analysis on Domestic Abuse and provide recommendations to the DASP on the development and implementation of a Learning and Development strategy/plan. Work is being undertaken with the Chairs of Adult and Children's Safeguarding Board L&D sub-groups to ensure a coherent and joined up approach to learning and development on domestic abuse is in place. An e-learning course on domestic abuse (including forced marriage, honour based violence and female genital mutilation) has been developed as part of the Artemis e-learning programme, which will be appropriate for both the children's and adults' workforce. This should be available for use in early 2015 and a launch of the Artemis DV programme and other DV learning materials is being planned for February 2015.***

***The DV campaign group was established in 2013 in order to raise awareness of domestic abuse across agencies and communities and provide information on support services available. This was in response to domestic homicide review recommendations. A campaign "This isn't love" was launched on Valentine's Day 2014 and posters and leaflets widely distributed. These are now being translated into 6 languages for use with BME communities. Promotional work has been undertaken at the 2014 Sandwell show. Work is also underway to develop campaigns on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage (FM) and Honour Based Violence (HBV) and re-launch a DVD on forced marriage (Married to the Streets) which has developed by young people in Tipton.***

**Awareness raising presentations have been delivered to head teachers and school staff.**

**The DASP has agreed to establish a MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) governance group to ensure that MARAC is functioning effectively and developing robust safety plans for high risk victims of domestic abuse. There have been recommendations in local DHRs about the effectiveness of MARAC and whilst there have been some improvements made to MARAC as a result, a comprehensive improvement plan has been further developed to ensure that improvements are consistently and routinely embedded into the regular functioning of MARAC. The first meeting of the MARAC governance group will be on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2014.**

**At the October 2014 DASP meeting, it was agreed to establish 2 further task and finish groups on:**

- **Forced Marriage – first meeting to be held on 4/12/14**
- **Sexual Violence – first meeting held on 26/11/14**

**These new task and finish groups will report regularly to DASP.**

14. That in connection with recommendation (13) above, it is recommended that the following sub-groups be established with appropriate chairing from a member of the Partnership and membership reflecting key stakeholders:-

Training and Development Sub Group;

Quality and Audit Sub-Group;

Domestic Homicide Standing Panel.

**Update: Please see update for Recommendation 13.**

- 2.2 The recommendations from the report on the Review of the DASP Delivery Plan and best practice are outlined below with an update provided for each one:

(1) That the Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group give consideration to funding a three year pilot programme of Identification and Referral to Improve Safety [IRIS] to providers of primary care in the Borough;

**Update: SWBCCG has secured £40K from the Children's Safeguarding Board for a pilot of the IRIS project with 20 GP surgeries in Sandwell. Planning and preparation work is underway for project implementation to start in April 2015. The IRIS pilot will be evaluated with a view to further roll-out across Sandwell if found to be successful.**

(2) That the DASP consider the best practice models put forward in relation to domestic abuse provision and support available in Acute and Community Health settings, with a view to creating enhanced working arrangements from the current provision.

***Update: The DASP held a Development Day in June 2014 to review their strategy and delivery plan and agree priorities for the next year. The Vice Chair of Neighbourhood Scrutiny Board presented the Scrutiny report on the DASP Delivery Plan analysis and best practice at the Development Day and DASP accepted the recommendations in the report. DASP agreed to seek funding to improve the response of primary care and A&E services to domestic violence and abuse through earlier identification and referral of victims. In addition to the development of IRIS (see recommendation 1), DASP agreed to seek funding for a similar project in A&E. Subsequently, Sandwell Women's Aid and Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals Trust have jointly submitted a funding application to the SWB Hospitals Trust Charitable Trust for the A&E work. The outcome of that bid should be known before Christmas.***

(3) That Public Health at Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council diverts the funding of £22,500, previously used to fund the Violence Against Women and Girls Consultant at Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group, to the Learning and Development Sub Group of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership for the provision of identified learning and training events.

***Update: Public Health has agreed to divert the funding of £22,500 to the DASP for the provision of learning and training events. The funding in 2014-15 is being used to support this work.***

(4) That the Director – Neighbourhoods undertakes work with the Director – Strategic Resources and other partners through the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership to develop a bid for funding for the Department for Communities and Local Government Transformation Challenge Award.

***Update: A draft bid for the Transformation Challenge Award was developed for work to address domestic abuse. However, there was not sufficient time to undertake work to reassure the council that any risks to the council in submitting the bid were manageable. It was therefore agreed that the bid would not be submitted to DCLG. However, other funding options have been pursued for the IRIS and A&E work (See updates for Recommendations 2 & 3 above)***

(5) That the Director – Neighbourhoods undertakes further negotiations in relation to securing Early Help funding for the Freedom Programme to be delivered in Children’s Centres.

***Update: Early Help funding has been secured in order to appoint a further 3 Domestic Abuse Advocates to be employed by Sandwell Women’s Aid from Quarter 4 2014-15 (in addition to the existing 2 posts funded by Early Help). The Domestic Abuse Advocates will work in localities with Community Operating Groups (COGs) across Sandwell. The Domestic Abuse Advocates (DAAs) will deliver the Freedom Programme in community venues in each locality, including in Children’s Centres, as part of their wider range of responsibilities. The Freedom Programme may be co-delivered with appropriately trained Children’s Centre staff or other appropriate staff working with children and families in localities.***

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 It is recommended that Neighbourhood Scrutiny Board should receive a further report from the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership (DASP) on the findings of DVA audit investigations once audits have been completed by partner agencies.
- 3.2 It is recommended that Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board should consider whether it still wishes to implement recommendation 5 in the DHR review. This recommendation is, “That the guidance contained in IMRs be further reviewed by the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board, particularly in relation to the formulation of recommendations by IMR Report Authors”.

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