

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 5 November 2020

Subject: Domestic Violence and Abuse - Update

Report of: Strategic Director - Neighbourhoods

Summary

This report was requested by the Community and Equalities Scrutiny Committee in order to provide Members with a response to questions about specific aspects of domestic violence and abuse response.

- Numbers of families from Manchester fleeing domestic abuse who needed to be accommodated outside the city and why, and
- The Sanctuary Scheme, including numbers of installations carried out

A more general update on progress across the agenda is also provided, including Covid-19 response and recovery work.

Recommendations

The Committee are invited to consider and comment on the information contained in this report.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	

A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The Delivering Differently Domestic Abuse Strategy aims to improve the lives of those in our city that are affected by domestic violence and abuse through better co-ordinated services that safeguard and support victims and any children impacted by living with abuse
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

Contact Officers:

Name: Ian Halliday
Position: Community Safety Policy and Performance Manager
Telephone: 0161 234 1284
E-mail: i.halliday@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Delia Edwards
Position: Domestic Abuse Reduction Manager
Telephone: 0161 234 3583
E-mail: d.edwards1@manchester.gov.uk

Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

No background documents.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report seeks to provide Members with updates on some specific aspects of the response to domestic violence and abuse, namely:

- Numbers of families from Manchester fleeing domestic abuse who needed to be accommodated outside the city and why, and
- The Sanctuary Scheme, including numbers of installations carried out

These specific updates can be found within sections 4.1 and 4.3 of this report respectively.

1.2 In addition to responding to these specific points of interest, the report also aims to provide Members with a broader update on work across the agenda, including the response and recovery phases of Covid-19.

1.3 Finally, the report also provides Members with an update on the Community Safety Partnership's discharge of its statutory responsibility to conduct Domestic Homicide Reviews

2.0 Background

2.1 'Delivering Differently – Manchester's Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy' was launched on the 17th June 2016. It is coming to the end of its lifespan and preparations are underway for a refresh to be published. These preparations are described in section 5 below.

2.2 As a reminder the three main ambitions of the Strategy were:

- Improve the lives of those affected by domestic violence and abuse through better co-ordinated services that can respond sensitively and efficiently
- Ensure a more co-ordinated approach that enables early identification and improved response that safeguards and supports victims and their children
- Reach out to under-represented groups and hard-to-reach communities by finding new ways to address this important issue

Additional to the second of these three ambitions was an intention to place greater focus on perpetrators of abuse, through robust challenge and enforcement but also provision of appropriate programmes for those who acknowledge their issues and are motivated to change their behaviour.

2.3 Responsibility for oversight of the delivery of the Strategy rests with the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), through the Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy Group, which meets quarterly.

2.4 The Strategy is underpinned by an Action Plan, operational progression of which is the responsibility of the member agencies and organisations of the Domestic Violence and Abuse Forum. The action plan is organised under four

headings that align with those of the Government's Violence against Women and Girls Strategy, and the Mayor's Policing and Crime Plan. Those headings are:

- Preventing abuse
- Provision of services
- Pursuing perpetrators and changing behaviour
- Partnership working and workforce development

2.5 Strategic oversight of progress of the action plan is provided by the Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy Group, which meets quarterly with lead officers and the Deputy Leader and is chaired by the Strategic Director – Neighbourhoods. Regular update reports are also provided to the Community Safety Partnership Board, and to the two Safeguarding Boards.

3.0 Covid-19, Response and Recovery

3.1 Measures put in place to control the spread of Covid-19 have meant that many people have been spending more time at home with an abusive partner and their usual sources of support may not have been readily available. The Domestic Violence and Abuse team has worked with colleagues in Commissioning and Communications, and with service providers in the city, to ensure continuity of support and services for victims, children and families throughout the lockdown period

3.2 That co-ordinated work continues as we move, albeit somewhat uncertainly, out of the response phase and into that of recovery and return to more face-to-face working with those who need our support and services

3.3 Examples of how the Council partners and providers have worked together during the past eight months have included:

Maintaining contact and support

- Our providers have largely continued to offer their services in various alternative ways, by telephone, video conferencing, online chat and web Q&As
- They have been proactive in adapting their delivery to these new methods, for example by recruiting additional helpline capacity, increasing social media output, and purchasing video conferencing packages for delivery of 1-1 work and continuation of groupwork programmes
- Other partners, such as GMP, have supplemented this with similar online reporting functions, social media output, Q&A sessions and webinars
- Operation Encompass notifications continue to be processed and issued to schools daily, with over 90 per week now being sent to schools by the morning following Police attendance at a domestic abuse incident where children were present.

Communications, awareness raising and engagement

- Awareness raising targeted campaign in supermarkets, local shops and businesses that have remained open in areas where data is telling us incident levels are high.
- Regular programme of social media messaging, comprising tailored local output and amplification of messages from partners, domestic violence and abuse services locally and nationally, and the Home Office.
- Arrangement with the pharmaceutical network to cascade information about local domestic abuse services to all community pharmacies in the City.
- Awareness raising messages broadcast on local community radio stations, and a messaging campaign on digital audio platforms
- Council website pages updated to include specific information relating to Covid-19, along with those of the Manchester Safeguarding Partnership.

Promotion of funding allocations and bidding opportunities

- The Domestic Violence and Abuse team has proactively promoted opportunities to bid for funding announced at various points in lockdown by the Government, and supported local agencies in making those bids.
- A number of these bids have been successful, resulting in service providers being able to utilise funds from sources such as the Ministry of Justice and Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government to maintain, adapt and in some cases enhance provision to meet changing and increasing demand during the course of the pandemic so far
- Further, the 'We Love Mcr' Charity has also provided local funding to a number of local domestic abuse services that has been of similarly significant help in ensuring continuation of service through the lockdown period.

Keeping in touch and keeping people informed

- Regular weekly 'Domestic violence and abuse and Covid-19' service and news updates have been compiled and widely circulated across the city, to keep professionals, volunteers and community organisations fully up to date with all the latest changes to service provision, funding opportunities and Government announcements.
- The Domestic Violence and Abuse team has adapted training material to produce and issue tailored briefing packages for use by front line staff across the city who may deal with or come across people seeking support during lockdown, either face to face or over the phone
- Virtual meetings of the Domestic Violence and Abuse Forum, Provider Forum and MARAC (Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference) Steering Group have been held, giving colleagues and partners the opportunity to stay in touch and contribute to discussion about

immediate issues during the pandemic and the way forward out of lockdown

Monitoring and oversight

- The Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy Group has continued to meet virtually through the current period and provide strategic oversight of the response and recovery work
- Regular fortnightly data reports have been compiled and published, containing up to date information about service demand and provision, trends and emerging issues across the domestic violence and abuse spectrum. These reports have helped to direct response through the period and ensure strategic leaders, in Manchester and at Greater Manchester level, are sighted on any issues and concerns to be addressed.

Moving into recovery

- Planning for the move out of lockdown has been ongoing with providers and partners since late June / early July. Providers have been undertaking risk assessments, developing safe working practices and making arrangements for workplaces to be Covid-secure, in conjunction with landlords of their buildings where necessary.
- The Domestic Violence and Abuse Team is a member of the Residents at Risk Covid Workstream Group and inputs weekly to that group in relation to the agenda and how plans for recovery are progressing.
- A key aspect of planning for recovery has been learning from and exploring the further potential of innovative and creative practices that have arisen during the lockdown period. An example has been the Priority Move on Project, described in 4.1.5 below, an initiative that Manchester Women's Aid (MWA) are seeking to exploit the best features of, build on and develop further over the coming months.

4.0 Other areas of progress and achievement

4.1 Domestic abuse and accommodation

- 4.1.1 Being able to provide those experiencing domestic abuse (and in many cases, their children) with the short and longer term accommodation solutions they need has continued to be a significant challenge during 2020, but one which local partners and providers have risen to.
- 4.1.2 Homelessness presentations where domestic violence and abuse are a factor steadily increased during the lockdown period, from an average of 10 per week in April to 18 per week in July and August.
- 4.1.3 In terms of the placement outcomes of those presenting to the service in these circumstances, colleagues in the Homelessness Service have produced the following data relating to domestic violence and abuse as main cause of loss of settled home. It is correct as at 08/09/20:

Borough in which placed	Families	Singles
Manchester	158	73
Rochdale	29	6
Salford	25	10
Tameside	21	6
Oldham	19	0
Bury	10	4
Stockport	3	1
Bolton	1	0
Trafford	0	4
TOTAL	266	104
Total outside Manchester	108	31
% within Manchester	59%	70%
% outside Manchester	41%	30%

4.1.4 Homelessness colleagues have asked us to highlight that households may have been placed in the areas concerned due to accommodation being available there, as opposed to that placement being outside of the city specifically because of the DVA concerns.

4.1.5 In addition, the PRS (Private Rented Sector) team have been recording, since February 2020, location details of those they help into a PRS tenancy. 3 such tenancies outside Manchester where DVA was the main reason for homelessness were supported during the period February to 08/09/20, one to Bolton, one to Salford and one to Warwickshire.

4.2 Priority Move On Project

4.2.1 In response to the challenge that lockdown presented around domestic abuse and accommodation, MWA worked with a range of partners including Manchester Move, various Registered Housing Providers and a range of charities, donors and volunteers to proactively identify suitable accommodation and effect moves for victims and families, providing them with stability and security at the earliest opportunity while also freeing up vital emergency bed space at the refuge

4.2.2 Since the beginning of lockdown, move on has been effected for 30 adults and 20 children, enabling the admission to refuge of a further 31 adults and 16 children.

4.2.3 This represents over 100% improvement on the throughput achieved during the same time period last year and is testimony to excellent cooperation and partnership working from all involved

4.3 Domestic Abuse Sanctuary Scheme

4.3.1 From 17th March 2020 to 8th June 2020 Safe Partnership's installers were not completing home visits and were furloughed due to Covid-19. The IDVA service was able to send referrals but no jobs were completed during this time.

4.3.2 Since then, a total of 10 installations have been completed, in the following wards –

- Miles Platting x1
- Gorton x 3
- Longsight x1
- Levenshulme x2
- Chorlton x1 (cancelled)
- Wythenshawe x 4 (1 x cancelled)

The installations concerned female residents, with seven being in private lets, and the other three being noted as owners/owner occupiers. Nine of the ten referrals were generated by the IDVA service after dialogue with the client, the other being generated by Manchester Women's Aid in respect of one of their clients.

4.3.3 Overall, the total spend in quarter 1 was £1230, accounting for five installations. One invoice remains outstanding as the work has not yet been completed, this would add approximately £245 onto this figure.

4.3.4 This figure does not represent all of the spend on such provisions in the city, as our principal social housing providers all carry out such work for their tenants within their own repair processes and budgets.

4.4 Operation Encompass

4.4.1 This initiative was developed by a police sergeant and a teacher, and first trialled in Devon in 2011. It has now been adopted by over 30 Police Force areas across the country.

4.4.2 The concept is simple but highly effective - Police officers attending a domestic incident in an evening / overnight provide schools with information prior to the next school day about children from their school who were present in the home when the incident occurred.

4.4.3 Armed with this information prior to the next school day commencing, school staff are able to put in place such overt and/or silent support measures within school that may be necessary to help and support those children.

4.4.4 Implementation and further development of Encompass across the city continues to be overseen by a steering group comprising officers from GMP, Community Safety Partnership and the Safeguarding in Education Team. During the early part of 2020, colleagues implemented a revised, centralised method for processing notifications to schools. This has proved highly effective and successful, significantly driving up the volume, consistency and quality of notifications sent out each day to schools. This process is supported by daily

recording and weekly performance reporting, enabling robust tracking of trends and highlighting where schools may need to be able to access additional support for their pupils.

4.4.5 The Community Safety Partnership and Safeguarding in Education Team are working with colleagues in GMP and the national Operation Encompass organisation to identify ways in which the Encompass process can be further enhanced and its reach extended. Recent developments have included establishment of a national daily helpline for school staff and an online Encompass training package for key adults and other colleagues at schools.

4.4.6 The Covid pandemic has resulted in an increasing number of children being home schooled. Colleagues in the Community Safety and Safeguarding in Education teams are working together with GMP to consider how to incorporate such children into the Encompass process, in order that, when a notification is generated in relation to children identified as being home schooled, there is an appropriate response.

4.5 LGBT IDVA service provision

4.5.1 This innovative Greater Manchester - wide service hosted by Manchester has been in operation since February 2017 and has continued to provide valuable specialist advice and support, including through the Covid-19 lockdown period, in response to a volume of referrals that has remained constant over the past eight months. Service provision was adapted to account for the restrictions of lockdown, with online and telephone support being offered. Tailored awareness raising and communications campaigns were also developed and put in place during lockdown and continue through the current time

4.6 Workplace domestic abuse policies

4.6.1 Officers from the Domestic Violence & Abuse Team have worked with colleagues in HR during the early part of 2020 on refreshing and updating the Council's workplace policy and guidance on domestic abuse. That updated policy and guidance is now approved and live and is supported by practical resources to assist managers in supporting and signposting staff who may disclose issues to them.

4.6.2 The Domestic Violence & Abuse Team have also provided advice and 'critical read' support to other organisations in the city who have been seeking to establish their own policy and guidance, or who have been updating ones they already had in place.

5.0 Review of Domestic Abuse Strategy and commissioning arrangements

5.1 At its meeting on 28th November 2019 the Community Safety Partnership Board agreed a process to combine the two tasks of i) reviewing and refreshing the Delivering Differently Strategy, and ii) reviewing the funding and commissioning arrangements for domestic violence and abuse services, into

one co-ordinated piece of work, with one set of terms of reference and timescale for completion.

- 5.2 To allow sufficient time for completion of these tasks, the re-tendering and re-commissioned of the existing range of services had earlier been approved by the Board and undertaken on a two year basis, to March 2022.
- 5.3 A review team was established and a Terms of Reference and timeline for the work were approved by the Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy Group on 23rd January 2020. Those terms of reference proposed that the review team's work would be organised under four headings, which were:
- Building our understanding of the experiences of victims and families engaging with victims and those who work with them, case work reviews, local, national and international research and analysis.
 - Review and shape the system response – how all those involved in the agenda work together, where the gaps are, how our response is funded and commissioned, how we communicate and raise awareness.
 - Co-develop a shared ambition for the change we want to see in the city – developing and agreeing what a clear and realistic ambition for how we prevent and respond to domestic violence and abuse over the next few years looks like.
 - A new funding and commissioning model for the city – developing and agreeing a model that is clear, simple and sustainable, and makes the very best use of all available resources.
- 5.4 Whilst the onset and impact of the Covid pandemic have had to be negotiated, with members of the review team occupied on various of the tasks outlined in para 3.3 above, they have adapted methods and means of working, not least around undertaking consultation, to ensure that the review and any new strategy arising are sufficiently informed by the views of colleagues, partners, providers, service users and others affected by domestic violence and abuse.
- 5.5 The review team is continuing with its work and has a development day scheduled for mid-October, to draw together and evaluate all of the information from the consultation and analysis phases of the work. Progress of the review will be regularly reported to the Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy Group, which in turn reports upwards to the Community Safety Partnership Board

6.0 Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews

- 6.1 The Community Safety Partnership is the statutory lead body for the conduct and administration of Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs), in accordance with the Home Office's guidance.
- 6.2 Since the requirement to conduct DHRs came into effect in 2011, the Partnership has led thirteen reviews, including one conducted jointly with colleagues in Salford due to the level of engagement of those concerned with agencies in that Borough.

- 6.3 Each of the reviews has generated a range of single and multi-agency actions. Oversight and monitoring of the multi-agency actions is the responsibility of the Community Safety Partnership Board, who receive regular quarterly updates on progress at their meetings.
- 6.4 Council staff and those from partner groups and agencies have the opportunity to engage in learning from the recommendations and findings from DHRs, through a combination of '7 minute briefings' and learning reports. Arrangements are also in hand with Manchester Safeguarding Boards (MSB) for DHR 'learning events' to be delivered where appropriate, through incorporation of DHRs into the MSB's ongoing programme of learning from Serious Case Reviews and Safeguarding Adults Reviews.
- 6.5 There are two reviews currently ongoing. Review Panels have been established, review chair / authors appointed and terms of reference and timescales agreed, in accordance with Home Office guidance. In both cases there are external factors such as criminal proceedings or conduct of other inquiries that are currently impacting upon the timescales, but, taking these into account, it is anticipated that both reviews will reach a conclusion by approximately the Summer of 2021.

7.0 Recommendation

The Committee are invited to consider and comment on the information contained in this report.