

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee – 3 September 2019

Subject: Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV&A) Review

Report of: Fiona Worrall, Strategic Director – Neighbourhoods
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Summary

This report sets out plans for developing and delivering a strategic review into Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV&A) services, and the current procurement being undertaken to support this work.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to note and discuss the plans for the strategic review.

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	Effectively supporting DV&A victims and survivors through high quality service provision allows them to move on from their experiences and make the most of their potential.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	

A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	
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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.

Delivering Differently Strategy

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The committee has asked to receive a report that provides information on:-

- the financial implications of delivering a domestic violence service;
- a review of the procurement process for these services; and
- a review as to whether these services are resourced appropriately and are providing value for money.

1.2 This report sets out plans for developing and delivering a strategic review into Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV&A) services, and the current procurement being undertaken to support this work.

1.3 As part of the Strategic Review the aim is to gain a much better understanding of the totality of spend, as support and interventions are spread across a number of different services and agencies. This will also include how we compare to other local authorities. This report is therefore focused on the financial implications and procurement needed to deliver this, as well as how the review will focus on ensuring value for money.

2.0 Background

2.1 Manchester has always taken domestic abuse seriously. The council knows its impact on the lives and well-being of victims, children and communities, and understands that its effects can last a lifetime. The city continues to have a zero-tolerance approach, and the council collaborates with partners such as the police, GMCA, health, education and the VCSE sector to ensure that all services can respond sensitively and efficiently to those affected by Domestic Violence & Abuse (DV&A).

2.2 As part of a new strategic approach to DV&A in the city the Delivering Differently Programme was launched in 2014, and as part of the “Delivering Differently” strategic review, Manchester now has:

- An updated DV&A Delivering Differently Strategy 2016 - 2020
- A DV&A Strategic Group, responsible for overseeing the delivery of the strategy.
- A Domestic Violence & Abuse (DV&A) Forum, responsible for the strategy action plan, which reports into the DV&A Strategic Group
- An Integrated Commissioning Panel.
- Increased working with, and input into, Greater Manchester strategies and delivery
- Participation in the Greater Manchester Domestic Abuse Partnership board, chaired by the Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester

2.3 As a consequence of the Delivering Differently programme and strategy, Manchester now has a clear vision for tackling DV&A focused on early intervention and prevention, a whole family approach, and holding perpetrators to account. This vision is seen as a joint responsibility across the Community

Safety Partnership, Adult Social Care and Children's Services, and the governance currently in place reflects this.

3.0 Current Domestic Violence & Abuse Procurement

- 3.1 The council and partners currently commission a range of DV&A contracts and grants to support victims/survivors and their families. A key element of this provision are the contracts for refuge and outreach provision, which are commissioned directly by the council.

Refuge Provision

- 3.2 The current contracts for refuge provision are held by Manchester Women's Aid (MWA) and Saheli. MWA provides 5 refuges, which offer safe accommodation for women with children & single women who are experiencing domestic violence and abuse. They also provide resettlement, outreach, and children and family support. Most refuges have self-contained flats, although there is one shared accommodation. The refuges also have an outdoor play area; children's play room and a shared lounge. Saheli provide specialist emergency, temporary refuge accommodation to South Asian women and their children who are fleeing domestic violence. Their six room refuge provides safe accommodation for women with children & single women who are experiencing domestic violence and abuse.

Outreach Provision

- 3.3 MWA currently hold the contract for outreach provision in Manchester. They provide dedicated outreach workers who are assigned to help both men and women at risk from domestic violence and abuse. Support provided includes liaison with MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference), working with partners to develop support plans and programmes of care, and delivering a range of group work programmes around areas such as move on, resilience and recovery, and the impact of DV&A on children.
- 3.4 These contracts are due to expire in January 2020 and it has therefore been necessary for procurement to take place. The focus of this procurement has been on getting new contracts in a suitable place to respond to the forthcoming strategic review rather than making large scale changes, and ensuring that the specifications for both services meet the aims and objectives of Manchester's Delivering Differently Strategy.
- 3.5 This step-change approach includes a focus on early intervention and prevention, partnership working, and a whole family approach. At the same time, an Our Manchester approach has been key to the new specifications to ensure that the behaviours and principles of the approach are embedded throughout new services. Both social value and demonstrating value for money are an intrinsic part of the new service specification to ensure that best value is obtained from our providers. There will be increased emphasis on move-on from services with the aim of creating additional capacity, meaning that more vulnerable residents can be supported.

4.0 DV&A Strategic Review

- 4.1 Delivering Differently provided an opportunity to bring services together to deliver a high quality, coordinated response to DV&A. A key outcome of the programme was the formation of the Domestic Violence and Abuse Forum, which meets quarterly and is chaired by the Lead Member for DV from MCC. Partners on this forum include the Police, Children's Services, Public health, Community Safety Partnership, Safeguarding, VCSE, Housing Associations and MMU. These meetings use a multi-agency approach to review and update the Domestic Violence Strategy document, and agencies update the Forum on new initiatives and how work is progressing within their organisation. This Forum reports to the DVA Strategy Group, which consists of a range of key partners, including MCC (Adult Care, Community Safety, Children's Services, Early Help, Strategic Housing), GMP, MHCC, and the CRC. Collectively, these fora provide the governance and oversight for DV&A commissioning activity.
- 4.2 The success of Delivering Differently is demonstrated by a number of areas of high quality working and service delivery, including an increased focus on developing early interventions and piloting new approaches. However, there is not currently a service offer and response that truly reflects the city's vision, and there are a number of challenges facing Manchester, namely:
- Funding practices: Services have grown organically over time meaning there are many disparate local funding streams, short term funding and disjointed local commissioning practices
 - Data: There is a pressing need for more consistent and robust data collection to inform local need and provision
 - Escalation: Services are focused on high risk victims and crisis interventions meaning that 'standard risk' cases may not be a priority until they have escalated to crisis point. This creates particular challenges for delivering an early intervention and prevention approach
 - Increased pressure on services: Increased reporting has placed additional pressure on all victims' services including specialist services, for example those supporting BME, disabled and LGB&T victims
 - Complex needs: Victims with the most complex needs find it particularly difficult to access appropriate support, further intensifying the risks they face
- 4.3 Additional challenges include the radical reform of the welfare system, which, since 2010, has introduced measures to cut overall welfare expenditure and to change the way particular benefits are structured and administered. This includes the implementation of Universal Credit in the city.
- 4.4 Most working age benefit levels have been frozen at 2015 levels for the following four years, as have most Local Housing Allowance levels of help with rent, despite continuing increases in rent in a buoyant local private rented sector. In addition, reductions in benefits because of the under occupation rules (the "Bedroom Tax"), the Benefit Cap and restrictions on allowances for some people who have more than three children have also reduced the

amount of money people have to live on. This is mirrored by increasing homelessness, increasing demand at foodbanks and increasing calls on discretionary budgets. All this has meant that more people experiencing domestic violence and abuse have felt trapped in circumstances until crisis point, and has also meant that once they have left, they are finding it much harder to source alternative accommodation and find their own solution.

4.5 Manchester has taken some steps but reforms have been taken at the edges, such as one-off funding for small-scale initiatives, as opposed to changing our mainstream services. What is now needed is a strategic review focused on turning the Delivering Differently vision into a reality. It is broadly known, from research and work with partners, what is needed to achieve this, but there are things that are first needed before Manchester can confidently move to a new model:

- There is a need to build an evidence case for change. The ethnographic approach has a large part to play in this, and will require the council to put current hypotheses to one side and take a blank mind approach. We need to understand more why perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse behave as they do, how victims react and what they are looking for. This does not mean starting from scratch, but there is more that can be done to support more significant change.
- A person-centred design approach to services is needed, working with partners, including people with lived experience, to develop what we need in our city.
- There is a need to understand what the art of the possible is with the market and with our own workforce. This needs to be ambitious but also deliverable.
- There is a need to build a financial case for change. Reform will have to be taken within existing budgets - i.e. mainstream funding will need to be reallocated. A robust financial case, including cost / benefit analysis, will be critical in supporting this. An evaluation framework will also be needed.

4.6 Taken together, the outputs of the review will mean that the city has a deep understanding of domestic violence and abuse in Manchester, the service blueprints for tackling it much earlier, and a case that partners across the city can confidently buy into. It will also provide insight into how best to ensure value for money in DV&A service delivery, including looking at ways that funding could be used differently.

4.7 The details of this review, including key stakeholders, a work plan, and timescales is currently being scoped out and further details will be provided once available. However, it is anticipated that this will be a significant area of work, requiring involvement and buy-in from multiple partners and with an appropriate level of project management and strategic support.

5.0 Procurement and Financial Implications

- 5.1 It has been agreed that the new contracts for refuge and outreach provision will be let on a 2 year basis in order to give the Council time to undertake the strategic review, with the option to extend these contracts for an additional 3 years subject to the outcome of the review. Procurement is currently underway with successful providers due to be announced in the next few months.
- 5.2 The current annual contract value for refuge and outreach contracts is £562k, which is contracted to the following organisations:
- Manchester Women's Refuge Accommodation
 - Manchester Women's Aid Outreach Provision
 - Saheli Refuge Accommodation
- 5.3 Once the strategic review has been completed there will be an opportunity to recommission these contracts if required, in order to deliver the review's recommendations and vision for the city. In addition, the review will also likely lead to wider-scale recommissioning of contracts and grants in order to bring services together to operationalise the comprehensive and strategic Delivering Differently approach.
- 5.4 Future procurement resulting from the outcome of the review is currently unknown. Other than contracts for refuge and outreach provision, other services are let on a rolling basis subject to annual review and ongoing achievement of positive outcomes. These services will be explored more in depth during the strategic review, with feedback from the review used to influence future procurement approaches.
- 5.5 Benchmarking against other Local Authorities has been looked at. Unfortunately, from a financial point of view, this is very difficult to benchmark because there is no specific budget line for DV&A within the Revenue Outturn data. In terms of non-financial measures, incidents of DV&A do not reflect occurrence of DV&A in reality, and vary according to initiatives and programmes in order to encourage reporting, so comparisons between areas are not meaningful. These issues will be progressed as part of the strategic review and as meaningful comparisons as possible will be analysed.
- 5.6 The procurement approach for the remaining contracts will be informed by the Strategic Review and officers will report back to Communities Scrutiny as this work progresses.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 Members of the Committee are asked to note and comment on the contents of the report.