



**Prosperous Communities
Committee**

Tuesday 15th March 2022

Subject: Lincolnshire Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy

Report by:

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Purpose / Summary:

To introduce the duties required as a result of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and the Lincolnshire Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1) Members are asked to agree the priorities set out within the Lincolnshire Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024 which contribute to fulfilling the statutory duties placed on the council to support the Domestic Abuse Act 2021**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

The report sets out the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Financial : FIN/167/22/B/SJB

The Council received grant funding of £31,785 from the Department of Levelling up Housing & Communities (DLUHC) for Domestic Abuse in September 2021.

Discussions are ongoing between all Districts within the County who are in receipt of the grant, to decide if this grant is to be paid over to a central pot or to be spent by the individual Councils.

If to be spent by the individual Councils, all or part of the grant may need to be transferred to the Unapplied Grants Earmarked Reserve at the end of 2021/2022 financial year to fund future years' expenditure on Domestic Abuse.

The transfer to Unapplied Grants is due to the grant not having conditions to repay if not spent in full.

Staffing :

The requirements will be met within existing staff resource

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

The Domestic Abuse Strategy is an inclusive strategy relevant to all victims of domestic abuse

Data Protection Implications :

None as a result of this report

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

Any action relating to property as a result of this strategy will seek to contribute to the councils climate change agenda

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

The Domestic Abuse partnership has considered other strategies and reports when developing this work;

- Tackling Violence against Women & Girls Strategy (including men and boys) 2021 (VAWAG),
- The Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Strategy for England and Wales,
- The Ministry of Defence, No Defence for Abuse 2018-2023
- The 2019 report produced by the National Rural Crime Network 'Captive & Controlled' Domestic Abuse in Rural areas.

Health Implications:

A safe secure home where people can live happy and independent lives is a wider determinant that contributes to the health of our residents

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report :

Wherever possible please provide a hyperlink to the background paper/s
If a document is confidential and not for public viewing it should not be listed.

Risk Assessment :

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The governance around the domestic abuse agenda in Lincolnshire has been reviewed in response to the Domestic Abuse Bill and a partnership consultation that took place in 2020.
- 1.2 As a result of this, and following the enactment of the Domestic Abuse Act in April 2021, Lincolnshire has developed a Domestic Abuse partnership that sits alongside the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership, the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board; putting Domestic Abuse at the core of the safeguarding agenda and ensuring it gets the focus and dedication it needs.
- 1.3 The partnership is made up of multi-agency representative from:
 - Lincolnshire County Council, Community Safety, Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Children's Health
 - Representatives from the District Councils
 - Lincolnshire Police
 - Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning group
 - Lincolnshire Community Health Services
 - Victim Support
 - EDAN Lincs
 - United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust
 - Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust
 - Public Health
 - Office for the Police Crime Commissioner
 - Probation Service
 - HM Courts and Tribunals
 - SSAFA – the armed forces charity
 - And other representatives where required
- 1.4 The strategy which was published on 5th January 2022 in line with Lincolnshire County Council's new statutory responsibilities under the new Act and sets out the shared ambition and key priorities for the Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse partnership in tackling domestic abuse and outlines the key areas of action over the next 3 years.
- 1.5 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 created new burdens for local authorities and as a result extra funding was received. The additional responsibilities are set out in Section 4. West Lindsey will receive £31,812 for 2022/23 from DLUHC to meet these additional burdens. In 2021 £31,785 was received.
- 1.6 A decision was made by all district representatives to wait for the strategy priorities to be agreed to then discuss as a county how each allocation could be spent. The district could spend the allocation individually or pool their allocations following the adoption of the strategy. Discussions between districts with regard to this matter are ongoing.
- 1.7 A delivery plan will be developed in collaboration with the partnership with the aim of addressing the ambitions set out within the strategy. As a partnership it

is felt that the strategy should set out our overall ambitions, principles and objectives in tackling domestic abuse, with the delivery plan setting out how we will achieve this, ensuring a level of fluidity is built into the process in order to respond to a changing landscape. The strategy and subsequent delivery plan and commissioning plans will address the needs of all victim groups.

2. Why is a Domestic Abuse Strategy required?

2.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed a statutory requirement on Tier 1 authorities to appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board. Tier 2 local authorities need to work with the lead authority to fulfil the required duties.

2.2 Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a statutory framework for the delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation and provides clarity over governance and accountability. These functions include:

- assessing the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support for all victims in their area, including those who require cross-border support
- develop and publish a strategy for the provision of such support to cover their locality, having regard to the need's assessment
- give effect to the strategy (through commissioning / decommissioning decisions) to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy

2.3 The Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Partnership has considered other relevant strategies when developing this piece of work:

- Tackling Violence against Women & Girls Strategy (including men and boys) 2021 (VAWAG),
- The Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Strategy for England and Wales,
- The Ministry of Defence, No Defence for Abuse 2018-2023 to name a few and
- The 2019 report produced by the National Rural Crime Network 'Captive & Controlled' Domestic Abuse in Rural areas.

2.4 Statistics around domestic abuse in Lincolnshire have also been taken into consideration;

- In the last five years, on average there have been over 10,000 domestic abuse incidents reported to Lincolnshire Police every year (up to April 2021).
- Of these, circa 6,000 are standard risk incidents, equivalent to around 3 in 5 reported domestic abuse incidents.
- There were 930 victims who were at high risk of serious harm or death referred into Lincolnshire's Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) by partner agencies in 2020-2021.

- In the 9 months April 2020 to December 2020, 6,648 people contacted EDAN Lincs (LCC Commissioned Domestic Abuse service) for support advice regarding domestic abuse.
- Since the introduction of the Statutory Domestic Homicide Reviews in April 2011 there have been 18 cases involving 27 deaths that have met the criteria for a domestic homicide review in Lincolnshire.
- Domestic abuse is the single most prevalent assessment factor identified in children's social care assessments. It is more prevalent than the presence of factors such as mental health, alcohol misuse, drug misuse, disability and illness, emotional abuse, physical abuse, or sexual abuse.
- In Lincolnshire during 2018-19, 55.1% of assessments Lincolnshire identified domestic abuse as an issue. This is higher than the national average of 50.6%, and places Lincolnshire 42nd among the 151 local authorities in England that supplied information. (Source: Department for Education)
- Domestic abuse has also specifically been identified as a factor in 54% of all serious case reviews, which investigate child deaths relating to maltreatment, abuse and neglect.
- In 2020/21 Domestic Abuse features in 7.6% of safeguarding referrals received by Adult Social Care, however as with all Domestic Abuse this is likely under reported and sometimes difficult to record accurately within assessment factors. Out of that figure a large proportion of the abuse reported was committed by a relative, with 27 people experiencing abuse from a family carer. The highest reporting came from adults aged 18-64 and 75-84. Lincolnshire is vast and predominately rural with clusters of diverse needs.

2.6 It is important to note that due to changing landscapes the strategy and delivery plans will need to remain fluid in order to recognise developments nationally and locally.

3. **Strategy Priorities**

3.1 The aim of the partnership is to work together in a fully committed and collaborative way to stop domestic abuse from happening through education, prevention and intervention. With this in mind the delivery priorities have been developed based on evidence provided through an extensive needs assessment

- Business Intelligence Picture - To use partner data to develop a business intelligence picture and look at a continual cycle of data analysis to support the partnerships ambitions. Evaluation and assessment against the strategy will also be developed.
- Community Engagement Picture - To assess the validity of survivor engagement programmes, communications and looking at the role of voluntary and community groups in early interventions.
- Early Intervention – Key areas have been identified to develop the approach to early response. This will include how the partnership responds to domestic

abuse risk assessment of a standard and medium risk. Currently there is no standard response like there is for high risk cases.

- Perpetrator Response – In order to tackle domestic abuse effectively the partnership needs to develop does how it responds to the behaviour of abusers
- Safe Accommodation – to consider a county wide approach to sanctuary scheme/target hardening, the need to explore move on accommodation options and further support for complex needs which would remove the need for a specific West Lindsey scheme. Further analytical work would be necessary in the development of the delivery plan with regard to this.

4. Requirements for West Lindsey from the Partnership

4.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 states that persons approaching as homeless as a result of Domestic Abuse no longer have to be “vulnerable” as a result of Domestic Abuse. They will be given priority status due to the domestic abuse. This will not present a huge burden on the Home Choices service as this is the approach that has always been taken by the team prior to the act being established.

4.2 West Lindsey is already represented at the multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC), domestic homicide reviews (if required) and the Domestic Abuse Operational Partnership Group.

4.3 It is still to be decided but it is likely we will be asked to represent West Lindsey as a single authority at the partnership board rather than 1 district represent all 7 areas.

4.4 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires tier 2 local authorities to work with the lead authority (LCC) as far is reasonably practicable. The duties are separate to local authority housing duties under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act 2002 which does not place a requirement on authorities to provide domestic abuse victims with accommodation. This requirement will be to provide accommodation and to provide advice on how to live safely and independently. This may require additional training for front facing members of staff

4.5 There may be additional asks from the partnership to West Lindsey in the future:

- Further work could be to engage community groups with the partnership using our local knowledge to deliver early intervention awareness/training/communications.
- We could also be asked to enable the provision accommodation to meet need – this would be delivered through our housing strategy

4.6 At this time additional resource will not be required. The aim of this strategy is to provide a consistent approach across the county to domestic abuse. The partnership and strategy will assist West Lindsey in how we use resources to meet our own needs and also provide a mechanism to find solutions through the partnership to meet these needs.

5. Recommendation

Members are asked to agree the priorities set out within the Lincolnshire Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024 which contribute to fulfilling the statutory duties placed on the council to support the Domestic Abuse Act 2021