DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL ABUSE IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE – MARCH 2016

Provider Landscape and Gaps in Service

Primary data sources:

- **Nottinghamshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: Domestic Violence and Abuse 2014, April 2014**
- **Nottinghamshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: Sexual Abuse 2014, September 2014**

Note: This document supports and underpins the Framework for Tackling Domestic and Sexual Abuse in Nottinghamshire 2016-2020

Everyone's Business

Tackling domestic and sexual abuse is a strategic priority for the police[1], health[2] and community safety partnerships across Nottinghamshire. As such, a wide range of activity is undertaken by our statutory partners on a daily basis as to tackle domestic and sexual abuse as part of their core business. This can include statutory arrangements in relation to protecting vulnerable adults and children and bespoke activity relating to issues such as the Night Time Economy, Cyber Crime, 'Troubled Families', Serious and Organsied Crime and Urban Street Gangs.

In addition to this work, the public sector invests over £1.8m in domestic and sexual abuse services within Nottinghamshire each year to support initiatives delivered largely within the third sector. These include prevention, crisis care and practical, emotional and therapeutic support services. The commissioned service landscape, however, is complex and insecure, comprising of short and medium term funding from central and local government, the NHS and charitable funds. It is also apparent from our understanding of the numbers of victims, survivors and families affected by domestic and sexual abuse locally that demand for specialist services considerably outstrips supply.

Key Messages

- Demands on domestic and sexual abuse service providers are increasing in line with improvements in identification and presentation of more complex cases
- There are opportunities to improve consistency and coverage of service provision across the area through a more integrated approach to commissioning and delivery
- There are significant gaps in specialist counselling and mental health service provision and mainstream services are unable to meet demand
- Levels of training and awareness of domestic and sexual abuse vary within and across agencies – particularly in relation to coercive control and hidden harm
- There remains a need to provide targeted education and awareness in order to safeguard against the risks of on-line harm, exploitation and abuse
- There are opportunities to improve the provision of non-court specified perpetrator interventions

[1] Tackling domestic and sexual abuse remains a strategic priority for the police via the PCC's Police and Crime Plan. In 2015, Child Sexual Exploitation became a national priority for the police following its inclusion within the Home Secretary's Strategic Policing Requirement for police forces

[2] In "Protecting People Promoting Health in 2012" the NHS recognised that responding to sexual and physical abuse is a priority across the health service

The Needs of Survivors of Abuse

In July 2012, the Ministry of Justice[3] introduced a new outcomes-based commissioning framework for supporting victims to cope with the immediate impacts of crime and recover from the harm they experienced. A further review[4] identified five outcome areas for service providers which were regarded as integral to meeting the needs of victims of crime. These comprise of:-

- Improving health and wellbeing – including mental and physical health
- Increasing safety and perception of safety
- Re-integration – enabling survivors to lead full and fulfilled lives
- Feeling informed – knowing what services are available and being kept up to date
- Improved experience of the criminal justice system

In 2014, the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner commissioned research[5] into the needs of victims, which included four focus groups with survivors of sexual abuse. Survivors reported a need for:-

Domestic Abuse	Sexual Abuse
• Support in escape from their relationship • Support to be and feel safe from harm • Support to make a better life for their children • Improved health and wellbeing and reduced isolation in the longer-term • Group sessions and peer support • Personal development and life skills courses to help empower and re-integrate women • Support is not time limited - people need to be able to dip in and out	• Smaller services so that they do not feel 'like a number' • Specialist counselling as standard mental health services do not provide the right support • Support is not time limited - people need to be able to dip in and out • Personal development and life skills courses to help empower and re-integrate women • Reductions in waiting lists – support is needed as quickly following a decision to disclose • Better promotion of all services for survivors • Better training for health professionals for when routine health treatments trigger victim flashbacks

This feedback has been taken into account as part of the decision making process for commissioning victim services for survivors of domestic and sexual abuse, as has the Ministry of Justice outcomes framework in delivering victim and survivor services.

[3] Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses: Government Response. Ministry of Justice 2012

[4] Evidence and Practice Review of Support for Victims and outcomes measurement. Callanan Meg et al, Ministry of Justice 2012

[5] Victims Views, Opinion Research Services, June 2014

Prevention Services

The provision of prevention and early intervention services in relation to domestic and sexual abuse has improved since 2013, particularly in light HMIC's 'Everyone's Business' Inspection (2013). It is recognised, however, that more preventative activity is required in the area and there are clear opportunities to improve consistency and coverage.

Ongoing prevention activity across Nottinghamshire includes:-

- **Education**: Work in schools to promote healthy and equal relationships - Good Relationships are Equal and Trusting (GREAT) project www.thegreatproject.org.uk (Equation[6])
- **Campaigns**: Supporting and promoting local and national campaigns, including 'Man Enough' and the 'White Ribbon' Campaign (SNB)
- **Training**: Targeted activity to train both those likely to come into contact with survivors of domestic and sexual abuse and those at risk of abuse. This includes a range of training, resources and information provided by Equation and initiatives such as the Freedom Programme, Pattern Changing, Hands are Not for Hurting[7]
- **Outreach and Early Intervention:** Including
    - work in maternity services to identify and support pregnant women at risk of abuse
    - targeted work in schools to support CSE and other safeguarding interventions
- **Implementing Learning and best practice:** Capturing, responding to and sharing learning from domestic homicide reviews[8] and serious case reviews

Prevention and Early Intervention: Key Areas for Improvement

Domestic Abuse	Sexual Abuse

• Learning from 7 DHRs conducted in Nottinghamshire between 2011 and 2014 identified that:-
  ○ There remain gaps in the flow of information sharing between agencies
  ○ Levels of training and awareness of domestic abuse vary within and between agencies
  ○ All agencies need to ensure personnel follow existing procedures fully and effectively
	• Learning from SCRs has identified that there remain gaps in the flow of information sharing between agencies
	• There are also opportunities to improve:-
	  ○ Consistency and coverage of education and early intervention work in schools
	  ○ Targeted education / awareness raising in relation to the risks relating to cyber / on-line harassment and grooming
	  ○ Further enhance specialist CSE identification and support services (Barnardos and NSPCC)

[6] Formerly Nottinghamshire Domestic Violence Forum

[7] Provided by Nottinghamshire Women's Aid and Women's Aid Integrated Services (WAIS)

[8] Domestic homicide reviews came into force in April 2011 having been established on a statutory basis under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004

Crisis Care and Protection

A range of services are available across Nottinghamshire which provide crisis care and protection to those experiencing and at risk of experiencing domestic and sexual abuse. These include:-

- **Helplines and triage** - providing information and advice, signposting and supporting access to local services. This includes a 24 hour freephone domestic and sexual violence helpline provided by Women's Aid Integrated Services and a counselling line provided by Rape Crisis
- **Sexual Assault Referral Centre** (Topaz Centre) provide specialist help and support over 170 victims of rape and sexual assault each year
- **Refuge Provision** - specialist domestic violence service for women and their children
- **Advocacy** – advocacy and support services such as IDVAs and young people's advocates
- **Safety and security** such as the Sanctuary Scheme providing security items and support (Women's Aid)
- **Multi-agency safeguarding and risk management processes** which include
    - Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)[9] held bi-weekly in north Nottinghamshire (Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood and Mansfield) and south Nottinghamshire (Ashfield, Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe)
    - Vulnerable People Panels which meet to plan support for medium risk safeguarding cases involving vulnerable people
    - Nottinghamshire Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - a central point for safeguarding concerns regarding children or adults. Information from different agencies is collated and used to decide what action to take
    - Children's Social Care receives referrals, assesses need/risk and makes care plans involving services for Looked After Children (children in care of the Local Authority)
    - The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harm (DASH) Risk Assessment which is a partnership-wide risk assessment process

Crisis Care and Protection: Key Areas for Improvement

Domestic Abuse	Sexual Abuse
• Continue to drive improvements in the crisis-led multi-agency intervention and support available to high risk survivors of abuse • Improve availability and awareness of safety and protection services for children and vulnerable witnesses • Driving further improvements in the way agencies record domestic abuse, including Honour Based Violence, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation	• Continue to drive improvements in the crisis-led multi-agency intervention and support available to high risk survivors of abuse • Improve availability and awareness of safety and protection services for those affected by sexual exploitation, modern slavery and other forms of hidden harm • Driving further improvements in the way agencies record sexual abuse, including cyber-enabled offending

[9] MARACs are multi-agency meetings to reduce the risks of harm to victims of domestic abuse. MARACs combine up to date information with risk assessment of a victims needs and link those directly to the provision of appropriate services for all those involved in a case

Practical, Emotional and Therapeutic Support Services

In excess of 1,500 people access a range of general and specialist support services for survivors of domestic and sexual abuse in Nottinghamshire each year. Largely provided by the voluntary sector via a number of Women's Aid organisations, Victim Support and Equation, these services include:-

- **Specialist Domestic Violence and Abuse Service** for adult, teenage and child survivors (Women's Aid, NIDAS, Equation)
- **Integrated Support** to cope and recover via a holistic joined approach (Women's Aid Integrated Services, Nottinghamshire Women's Aid, Broxtowe Women's Project, We R Here). This includes the Pattern Changing and Freedom Programmes
- **Independent Domestic Violence Advocates** (IDVAs) **Independent Sexual Violence Advocate**s (ISVA) who support high risk victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse
- **Specialist service for male survivors of abuse** (Equation)
- **Counselling** services which provide emotional support through group, 1:1 and telephone-based sessions (SHE, ISAS, Rape Crisis, Nottinghamshire Women's Aid, We R Here). This includes targeted support for young victims of abuse aged 13 to 25 (ISAS)
- **Therapeutic work** including creative therapy, personal development groups for survivors of domestic and sexual abuse (SHE) and psychological therapy (Let's Talk Wellbeing)
- **IRIS (Identification and Referral to Improve Safety)** - a domestic violence training, support and referral programme that provides support for patients in general practices who have lived with or are living with domestic abuse. The project also provides domestic abuse awareness training to a range of practice staff, from GPs to receptionists (Women's Aid)
- **Other specialist roles** including
    - specialist nurse and midwifery roles within the health service in relation to domestic abuse (Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, Sherwood Forest Hospital Trust, Nottinghamshire healthcare NHS Trust, Community Health Partnerships), which includes a Midwife working with survivors of FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)
    - specialist practitioners based within the Police, Health Care Trust, East Midlands Ambulance Service and Accident and Emergency

Practical, Emotional and Therapeutic Support Services: Key Areas for Improvement

Domestic Abuse	Sexual Abuse
• Levels of specialist therapeutic services remain limited relative to current levels of demand • Improving the consistency and co-ordination of specialist and non-specialist services and improve knowledge of available referral pathways • Reviewing opportunities to maintain and enhance group sessions and peer support • Continuing to improving provision and awareness of practical safety measures and advice	• Independent Sexual Violence Advocacy remains limited across the county • Specialist provision for child survivors of abuse is limited and largely delivered via mainstream services • Lack of long term specialist therapeutic and psychological support services relative to demand • Waiting times for key services remain high and increasing (exceeding 3 months) and case complexity continues to increase.

Reducing the risk of offending and re-offending

A range of services and initiatives are in place across Nottinghamshire which aim to reduce the risk of domestic and sexual offending and ensue perpetrators are held to account for their actions These include:-

- **Specialist Domestic Violence Courts** which have been in operation in the area since 2008. The courts aim to increase successful prosecutions, reduce the numbers of victims withdrawing from the criminal justice system and improve victim satisfaction through via IDVA support and swifter prosecution times
- **Police Domestic Abuse Support Unit and Rape Investigation Team**
- **Building Better Relationships Programme** (BBR) provides group work for men who have abused their female partner or ex-partner. The programme is only available by order of the court as part of a community sentence or a condition of a prison licence
- **Early intervention**: Family based work with young people who have begun to perpetrate domestic abuse or are at risk of doing so (NIDAS)
- **Reducing harm and risk of offending** through work carried out by the National Probation Service (NPS) and Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), both in terms of work with offenders individually and in programmes
- **Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements** (MAPPA) to manage the risks posed by known violent and sexual offenders - reducing serious re-offending and preventing further harm to victims. Information about MAPPA-eligible offenders continues to be shared by local agencies in order to inform risk assessments and risk management plans
- **Maximising use of available tools and powers** including Domestic Violence Protection Notice/Orders and the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme which enables potential victims of abuse to obtain information about their partner in order to help them make an informed decision.

Practical, Emotional and Therapeutic Support Services: Key Areas for Improvement

Domestic Abuse	Sexual Abuse
• Exploring opportunities to develop an integrated non-court specified perpetrator programme across the county to tackle the complex needs of DA perpetrators • Further develop appropriate local approaches to dealing with serial, enduring and multiple perpetrators of abuse and those exhibiting potentially harmful behaviour	• Drive improvements in the proportion of serious sexual offences that are progressed through the criminal justice system[10] • Continue to develop education and early intervention programmes, particularly with regard to on-line abuse, harmful behaviours and exploitation

Strategic responsibility for reduction and prevention of domestic and sexual abuse is jointly held between the Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board and the Safer Nottinghamshire Board.

[10] While Nottinghamshire has a better than average record for successfully prosecuting sexual offences, the area also carries a lower than average sexual offence caseload indicating that fewer cases are reach court than in other areas of the country.