

Domestic Violence Briefing

Crime and Safety Scrutiny Panel

Background/Information

The Enfield multi agency partnership continues to tackle domestic violence, reduce risks for victims and their families and hold perpetrators to account. It also identifies and continues to develop work to deliver best practice initiatives. Domestic violence is a priority area in our strategic assessment. Statistics note the following in relation to domestic violence in Enfield:

- Almost a third of personal crimes in Enfield are flagged as domestic violence (30%), this rises to over four in ten (41%) for crimes of physical violence and sexual offences.
- Domestic Violence figures are currently up 3.9% in Enfield as opposed to a 4.6% fall across London (to 29/1/12)

The increase in reported crime can be attributed in part to greater confidence in victims reporting to the police and other partners. Routine enquiry, identification and appropriate referrals for early intervention and prevention are key in reducing the impact of domestic violence. This is also a factor in the reduction of repeat victimisation.

The Home Office definition of domestic violence is: *Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.*

The current consultation by the Home Office on the definition of domestic violence includes consideration for amendment to include coercive control. It also includes consideration for the definition to be extended to all 16 – 17 year olds.

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/definition-domestic-violence/>

Over the last year there have been numerous developments that ensure increased safety for victims of domestic violence which are noted in brief below:

Safe Choices

The aim of Safe Choices is to deliver 6-7 week group work sessions to young women aged between 13-17 years. The detailed outcomes will be that young women:

- Identify aspirations and ambitions
- Engage in other support services
- Engage in positive activities
- Experience reduced risk factors
- Understand the difference between safe and unsafe relationships
- Have increased ability to choose and negotiate a healthy safe relationship
- Know that violence and coercion do not have a place in sexual relationships

- Know and understand the consequences of criminal behaviour for themselves and the victims of that behaviour

Additionally the Safe Choices programme has delivered a Train the Trainers Course enabling practitioners to deliver the Safe Choices Group work programme in Enfield

The Train the Trainers course gives agencies the opportunity to develop responses to gang affected girls and contribute to the ongoing running of a Safe Choices Group work programme in Enfield.

Further funding identified will provide additional support and awareness raising workshops that link with the Safe Choices programme. Workshops will be delivered to:

- Pupils across secondary schools and colleges within Enfield
- Teachers and allied education professionals in secondary schools and colleges across Enfield
- Other agencies as identified by the commissioner and SWA (specifically those identified as referral agencies for the Safer Choices group programme)
- Multi agency partnerships as identified by the commissioner and SWA that would benefit from awareness raising sessions

Solace Women's Aid will provide 1 to 1 case work support aimed at:

- Young girls within the borough who are at risk of or are experiencing domestic or sexual violence, including through gang involvement
- Supporting young girls within the borough who are not ready to access the Safer Choices group programme
- Acting as a referral pathway into the Safer Choices group programme

White Ribbon Day

Enfield celebrated a successful White Ribbon Day and 16 days of action with a number of events which included:

- White Ribbon Day conference
- Projection of a giant white ribbon and national helpline number on the Civic Centre building – a first in the UK
- Walk a Mile in Her Shoes event
- Big Cake Bake
- Tree Dressing

Shan Kilby was invited to speak at the national Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA) conference in January and 'spoke powerfully on the importance of raising awareness in the wider community and gave examples of Enfield's innovative techniques to cause people to confront what is otherwise a silent issue'. Other keynotes at this event included Vera Baird QC and Sara Thornton QPM, Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police.

Enfield became the first London borough to receive White Ribbon Authority Status in November 2010. In recognition of the partnership work and this achievement Enfield were also invited to give a presentation at City Hall with Kit Malthouse to promote White Ribbon initiatives to all London Boroughs, a number of which have since gained this status.

TecSOS

Enfield has been selected as a pilot borough for TecSOS which is a new technical device enabling victims of domestic abuse to contact the police in an emergency. The advantages of using a TecSOS handset is calls will arrive to the police control room via the normal route, through pre-programming, and is immediately identifiable as a TecSOS alert. The operator will be able to identify the caller and their approximate location and in some cases, can also have access to key information such as previous calls, details of the original perpetrator, etc.

Body Worn Camera's

Body Worn Cameras have been piloted since December 2011, primarily to capture best evidence during police attendance at incidents of domestic violence in Enfield Borough and subsequent use of the evidential footage during the investigations and court proceedings. In areas that have piloted the use of body worn cameras results have shown in an increase in early guilty pleas and a reduction in offenders electing to attend Crown Court.

International Women's Day

As part of the International Women's Day celebrations in Enfield a conference will be held on 8th March 2012 at the Dugdale Centre. Invitations will be forwarded for circulation. The theme of International Women's Day this year is 'Connecting Girls: Inspiring Futures'. A number of keynotes will be attending this event which will also include an exhibition area by stakeholders, statutory and voluntary sector partners.

These are a small number of developments within the partnership, with many other areas and agencies worthy of note also for their work in this area. This work continues to be developed to meet the needs and support requirements for people who live and work in Enfield.

Purpose of the Briefing

To update the panel on our partnership work in tackling the issue of domestic violence and to raise awareness of issues that are faced by the partnership in our ongoing response to domestic violence.

Recommendations

- 1) To note the activity currently underway
- 2) To receive further reports on Enfield's Coordinated Community Response to tackle domestic violence

Shan Kilby