

## Health and Wellbeing Board

Meeting Date 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### Safe in Warwickshire Warwickshire's Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2015 - 18

#### Recommendation(s)

Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board are requested to:

- promote the Violence Against Women and Girls strategy within their organisations;
- support their organisation's participation in training programmes to improve identification and response to violence against women and girls; and
- support the future roll out of the implementation plan to improve services and address gaps, as set out in the strategy.

#### 1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 This is Warwickshire's first Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy. It brings together our existing work to tackle domestic abuse and sexual violence with a new, broader approach that addresses all forms of violence against women and girls. It aims to ensure a more integrated and effective partnership response that reflects the experiences of those affected. This includes: forced marriage; stalking; female genital mutilation; sexual exploitation; trafficking and crimes in the name of honour.
- 1.2 All forms of violence against women and girls are human rights violations and criminal offences; the impacts and consequences for health and wellbeing are similar; all are considerably underreported; minimisation and myths exist across all forms; those affected are under-reported by services; and perpetrators are often known to victim-survivors.
- 1.3 Based on the prevalence data available the estimated cost of domestic abuse to public services alone in Warwickshire is about £54.3 million per annum. The long term human and emotional cost of VAWG to the individual is immeasurable.
- 1.4 The Strategy has been developed following an in-depth consultation process both with professionals and agencies from the voluntary and statutory sectors and with victim-survivors themselves.
- 1.5 The Strategy recognises that men and boys can also be victims of violence and therefore does not exclude them from this work. However, women and girls are at greater risk of these crimes, therefore a gendered approach to VAWG is both appropriate and necessary.

## 2.0 The VAWG Strategy

- 2.1 Warwickshire's Strategy objectives and outcomes have been adopted from the national strategy, "Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls", focusing on: prevention; provision; protection; and partnership. Using this framework the strategy sets out what we have in place already and what we need to do to improve services and address gaps.
- 2.2 A multi-agency Violence Against Women and Girls Board has been established by the Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board. The VAWG Board has led the development of the Strategy and is now focusing on the Implementation Plan and communications strategy.

## 3.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 3.1 The Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board approved the VAWG Strategy at its meeting in March 2015. The Strategy is now being presented to other key partnership boards to raise awareness about the issue, highlight interdependencies and secure commitment for the strategy outcomes and the development of the implementation plan.
- 3.2 In 2015 the VAWGB Board has agreed to focus on prevention: challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster violence against women and girls; and intervening early where possible to prevent it. Work to achieve this objective includes completion of the communications strategy, undertaking a training needs analysis and building capacity with all stakeholders - especially frontline staff and schools - to enable them to recognise and support victims of violence and build resilience in young people and families.
- 3.3 Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board are therefore requested to commit their organisations to :
- supporting the development and the delivery of the Violence Against Women and Girls communications strategy;
  - taking part in the training needs analysis; and
  - ensuring staff take up training opportunities

## Background papers

1. Background paper 1: Safe in Warwickshire...Warwickshire's Violence Against Women and Girl's Strategy 2015-18

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