

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee Portfolio Holder (Adult Social Care) and
Portfolio Holder (Community Safety)
Decision Making Session

Date of Committee 26 November 2010

Report Title Strategic Review of Domestic Abuse
Support Services in Warwickshire

Summary Community Safety, Supporting People and the district and borough councils commissioned an independent strategic review into domestic abuse support services in Warwickshire. This paper outlines the key conclusions and asks the Lead Portfolio Holders to approve the proposals in relation to the commissioning of domestic abuse services in the county for wider consultation.

For further information please contact:

Sue Ingram Domestic Abuse Manager Tel: 01926 412016 sueingram@warwickshire.gov.uk	Rachel Norwood Supporting People Lead Commissioner Tel: 01926 743255 rachelnorwood@warwickshire.gov.uk
--	--

Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? No.

Background papers Strategic Review of Domestic Abuse Support Services in Warwickshire: An Executive Summary (available upon request)

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- Details to be specified

- Other Committees Communities O&S 3.11.10.....
- Local Member(s)
- Other Elected Members
- Cabinet Member Cllrs Hobbs and Seccombe
- Chief Executive
- Legal Alison Hallworth.....
- Finance

- Other Strategic Directors
- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION NO

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation Key stakeholder focus groups and public e-consultation

**Portfolio Holder (Adult Social Care) and Portfolio Holder
(Community Safety) Decision Making Session
- 26 November 2010.**

**Strategic Review of Domestic Abuse Support Services in
Warwickshire**

**Report of the Strategic Director of Customers, Workforce
and Governance and Strategic Director of Adult, Health
and Community Services**

Recommendations

- (1) That the Portfolio Holders for Adult Social Care and Community Safety authorise a 3-month period of consultation on:
 - (i) The service model from the Strategic Review of domestic abuse support services.
 - (ii) The proposed de-commissioning of the Ashram refuge in Nuneaton.
 - (iii) Future support service priorities within the service model in anticipation of reduced budgets.
- (2) That Portfolio Holders authorise a market testing exercise to be undertaken prior to a decision being made on whether to bring an element of the domestic abuse service in house or to undertake an open tendering process.
- (3) That the Portfolio Holders receive a report on the outcome of consultation and a full equality impact assessment of the final proposals in order to make decisions regarding the future commissioning of domestic abuse support services in Warwickshire following a period of consultation.

1. Purpose of Report:

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Lead Portfolio Holders with the key conclusions from a Strategic Review of domestic abuse support services in Warwickshire, including a proposed service model.
- 1.2. As described by the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) domestic abuse services in Warwickshire are acknowledged as greatly improving. The report states that “the last 4 years have seen big changes in the way the police, the NHS, councils and voluntary organisations support people subject to abuse.” The strategic review aims to build on the good practice noted in

the CAA in order to deliver high quality support to those affected by domestic abuse in Warwickshire.

2. Key Conclusions and Proposed Service Model for Warwickshire:

2.1 The key conclusions from the Strategic Review are:

- Access routes to domestic abuse services are very complex and need simplifying. Competition among some service providers impacts on inter-agency referrals and joint working.
- Warwickshire has some under provision of services including IDVA's (Independent Domestic Violence Advocates), services for male victims and same sex victims.
- The practice guidelines for Forced Marriages need to be introduced to Warwickshire.
- There is a shortfall in refuge provision and a need to monitor this on an on going basis, alongside an improved sanctuary scheme.
- An increase in the provision of the Feeling Safe group (therapeutic group work programme for children and their non-abusing female carers) would be beneficial.
- There is a need for an accredited programme for perpetrators not on court Orders.
- Data collection and recording amongst Housing, Police and service providers needs standardising and improving. Sexuality and incidences of Forced Marriage also need recording by all agencies.

2.2 This report contains 3 "Service Models". Diagram A shows the current provision in Warwickshire. Diagram B illustrates the proposed service model for Warwickshire when we were expecting government funding. Diagram C illustrates the proposed service model for Warwickshire given the withdrawal of government funding

DIAGRAM A – Current Service Provision

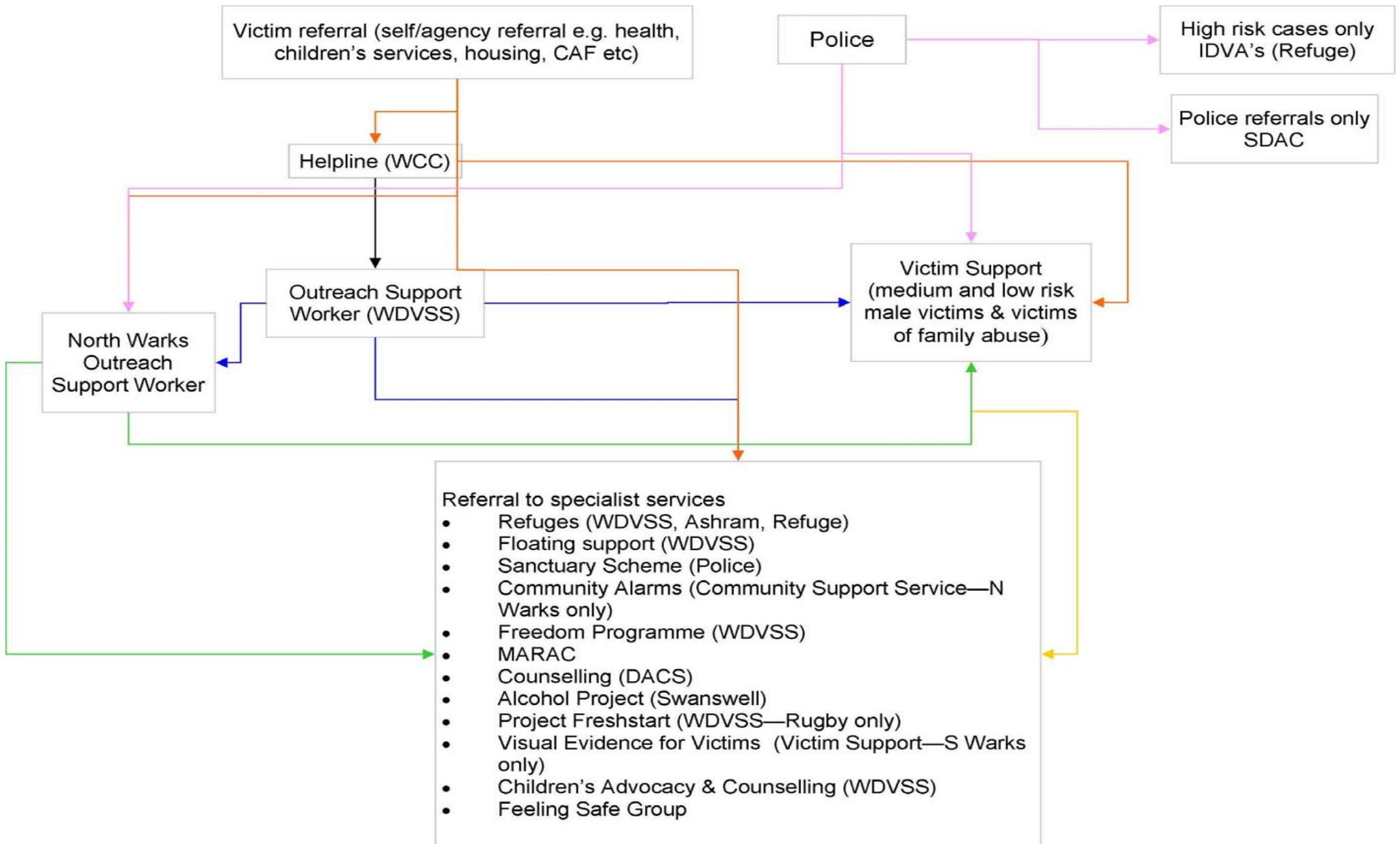


DIAGRAM B

Proposed Warwickshire Domestic Abuse Support Services Model – with *full funding*

Strategic Overview: service commissioning and co-ordination provided by **WCC Domestic Abuse Manager**

Victim referral self/ agency e.g. Police, Health, Housing Children’s Service, Probation Trust, Victim Information Partnership (VIP)

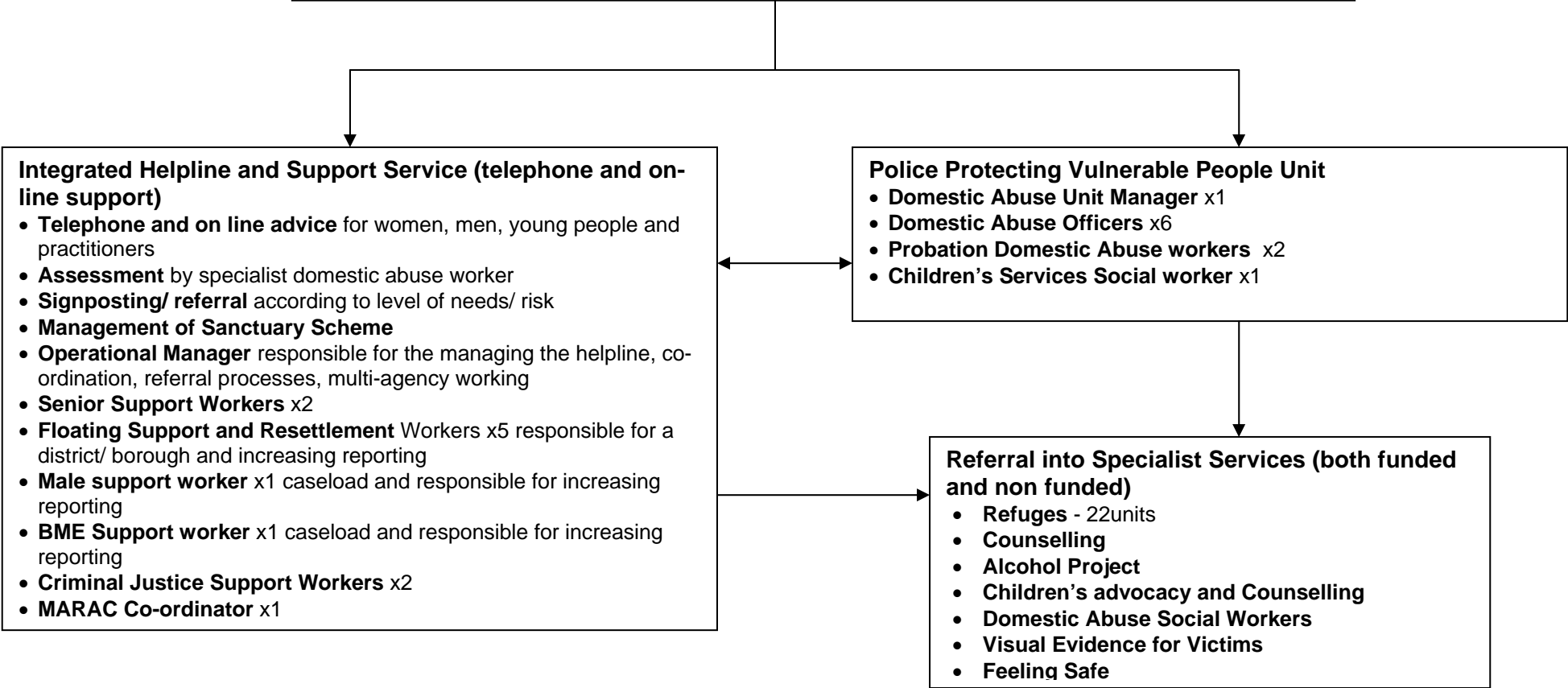
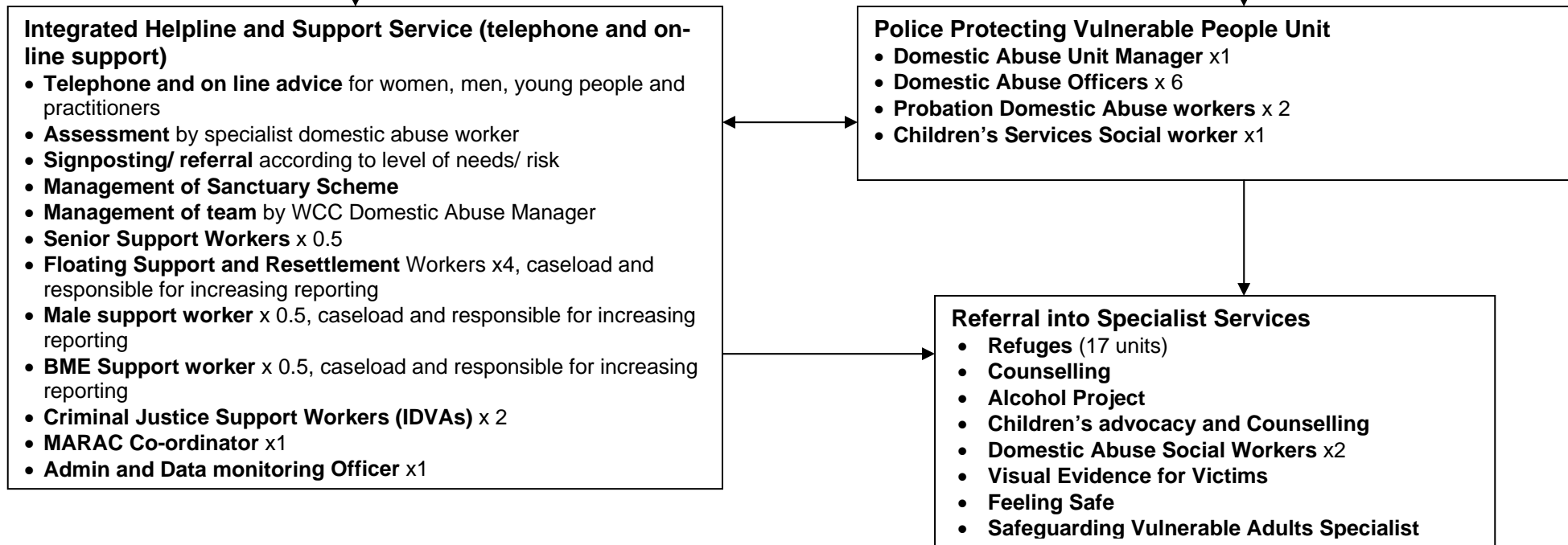


Diagram C

Potential Warwickshire Domestic Abuse Support Services Model – With *reduced funding*

Strategic Overview: service commissioning and co-ordination provided by **WCC Domestic Abuse Manager**

Victim referral self/ agency e.g. Police, Health, housing Children’s Service, CAF



- 2.4 The service models in Diagram B and diagram C were proposed in order to address some recommendations and the areas of weakness in Warwickshire highlighted by the consultants. This includes ensuring more joined up service provision and clear pathways into services for victims and referring agencies as well as the provision of a dedicated helpline operated by specialist staff, services for male victims, increased refuge provision, better targeted Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) service provision and increased floating support provision.
- 2.5 The model has a Police Protecting Vulnerable People Unit and an Integrated Helpline and Support Service. Both these units can then refer into the specialised services such as refuges and counselling. It is acknowledged that not all of these specialist services will be able to be funded in the future.
- 2.6 Any service model implemented would become operational during 2011/12 and would join up the commissioning of services by WCC Supporting People and Customers, Workforce and Governance and district and borough councils to provide best value for money, a more seamless service to service users and joined up contracting arrangements with providers.

3. In House or External Provider

- 3.1 The Strategic Review considered the merits of both in-house and external service provision of the Integrated Helpline and Support Service element of the service model. These 2 options have been considered by the multi agency project group.
- 3.2 Cost modelling of both an in-house and externally provided service is not conclusive, although it has demonstrated that an in house provision of the integrated helpline and support services element of the model could cost less than an external provider through a tender process. This difference in cost and therefore the difference in the level of service provision increases in favour of the in house service as the funding made available is reduced. The costing has taken into account the elements of the service model the Project Group considered to be the core domestic abuse services, which is predominantly the Integrated Helpline and Support Service and women's refuge provision.
- 3.3 Therefore, we propose to test the model against the market with a view to bringing the service in house if external providers cannot meet the requirements.

4. Refuge Provision

- 4.1 The Strategic Review highlighted that Warwickshire has insufficient overall refuge provision. The current position is 3 units in Rugby, 5 units in Stratford, 7 units in Nuneaton and 4 units for BME women only in Nuneaton, totalling 19 units in the county.
- 4.2 The review made the following points about the Ashram refuge in Nuneaton which only accepts referrals from the BME community:
- 4.2.1 Continued under utilisation of the refuge (53.91% in 2006/07, 79.11% in 2007/08, 56.25% in 2008/09 and 84.96% in 2009/10)
- 4.2.2 Very low levels of usage by Warwickshire women – only 17% over a 3 year period (i.e. 83% of clients are from out of county),

- 4.2.3 The refuge was only rated as fair value for money in 2008. Regional benchmarking information from 2009 – 10 shows that when benchmarked against like services the hourly unit rate is below the average range, however average weekly unit cost is significantly above the regional average.
- 4.2.4 The number of BME women going out of Warwickshire for refuge services last year totalled 3 out of 41. When this is added to the number of women remaining in county, this suggests that there are not a significant number of BME women in Warwickshire accessing specialist refuge provision at present.
- 4.3 The review recommended that provision for BME victims would be greatly enhanced by provision of a dedicated BME support worker. The specialist worker will understand the additional cultural needs of victims from BME backgrounds, including issues relating to forced marriage, honour based violence, victims with no recourse to public funds and Bounty Hunting (where victims are illegally pursued for a reward).
- 4.4 There is currently relatively low reporting of domestic abuse amongst BME victims in Warwickshire. However, the British Crime Survey indicates that there are at least 1,000 BME victims of domestic abuse annually in the county. The dedicated worker would have responsibility for monitoring the reporting and needs of victims from this group. As well as supporting victims, they would be tasked with increasing awareness and the number of referrals received from the BME community through outreach work.
- 4.5 The review therefore recommended decommissioning the Ashram refuge in Nuneaton.

5. Impact of Potential Reduction in Funding

- 5.1 Current service provision across the County is illustrated in Diagram A and includes 19 refuge units (including Ashram) plus 5 units in Warwick District currently not in receipt of public funding (although this refuge provision is at risk due to a lack of funding). There are also 2 Criminal Justice Workers (IDVAs), 5 floating support workers (this was temporarily increased to 6.5 workers in order to manage demand but on going funding was not available) and 0.5 outreach worker in North Warwickshire.
- 5.2 The initial proposed service model (Diagram B) was developed prior to the loss of LPSA 2 funding for domestic abuse support services and assumed that current levels of Supporting People funding would be retained. The model included 22 refuge units (not including Ashram, but including the currently unfunded provision in Warwick District and an increase of units in Rugby), 5 floating support workers, 2 senior support workers, 1 BME support worker and 1 Men's support worker. The team would have been managed by a specialist operational manager. There would also have been 2 criminal justice workers (IDVAs).
- 5.3 Following the Emergency Budget in June 2010, Warwickshire was no longer able to provide the £484,800 LPSA 2 reward monies towards victims support services nor the £200,000 for voluntary perpetrator work. Furthermore, WCC along with all local authorities are planning for an unknown funding reduction to the Area Based Grant which currently includes Supporting People funding.

We have been asked to plan for a 25% reduction until this is clarified by the Comprehensive Spending Review in October 2010.

- 5.4 In light of these announcements the Implementation Group has re-modelled the service provision with the potential available funds and this is illustrated in Diagram C. The model includes a reduction to 17 refuge units (not including Ashram), 4 floating support workers and 0.5 senior support workers. There would be 0.5 BME support workers and 0.5 men's support worker. We would be able to retain the 2 criminal justice workers (IDVAs). However, there would also be a reduction in the funding available to the Sanctuary Scheme and WCC contribution to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference Co-ordinator post. Furthermore, this model assumes that an external provider will not be able to deliver the integrated helpline and support services for the funding available and therefore expects these services would be provided in house and managed by the WCC Domestic Abuse Manager. It assumes that refuge provision would continue to be provided externally.
- 5.5 Given the anticipated budget reductions, knowledge of the sector within the Project Team and the cost modelling exercise, the multi agency project implementation team favoured an emphasis on retaining the helpline and support service element of the model which would result in a reduction in refuge units across the County. It would be important to maximise the outcomes from the remaining refuge units. However, it is important that this is discussed more widely and that stakeholders, providers and people experiencing domestic abuse are consulted on service priorities within the model in light of anticipated budget reductions.

6 Proposed Consultation

- 6.1 Future funding in Warwickshire for domestic abuse support services remains unknown and therefore we are unable to consult on a firm proposal. We do however believe it is important to garner the views of key stakeholders on the principles that underpin the proposed models.
- 6.2 In order to be ready to implement a service model in Warwickshire with the funding available in the future, the Project Implementation group plan to commence a 3 month consultation period on the recommendations in this report regarding the decommissioning of the Ashram refuge and the broad proposed service model.
- 6.3 It is important that partners, stakeholders and those with experience of domestic abuse are able to input to the decision making process as to how the challenges of reductions in funding should be met. Therefore it is recommended that the Project Implementation Group consult on what people consider to be the priority support service type(s) in Warwickshire.
- 6.4 The outcomes from the consultation would inform future decisions regarding the service model for domestic abuse support services in Warwickshire and the level of different service provision within the model. This would ensure Warwickshire is well placed to quickly implement required changes to service provision based on evidence of need and consultation when the impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review is known.

7 **Next Steps**

- 7.1 The Warwickshire Housing Support Partnership (previously the Supporting People Commissioning Body) and the Warwickshire Safer Communities Partnership agreed that the key conclusions and the proposed service model from the Strategic Review be presented to the Lead Portfolio Holders to authorise a 3 month period of consultation with stakeholders and the wider community.
- 7.2 The Project Implementation Group will continue to meet to progress the implementation of the recommendations from the review and implement the service model that is approved by the Lead Portfolio Holders following consultation.

DAVID CARTER
Strategic Director of
Customers, Workforce and
Governance

WENDY FABRO
Strategic Director of Adult,
Health and Community
Services

Shire Hall
Warwick

16 November 2010