

Health and Wellbeing Board

Domestic Abuse Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2021

12th January 2022

Recommendation(s)

That the Health and Wellbeing Board:

1. Considers and endorses the recommendations emerging from the Domestic Abuse Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
2. Encourages partner organisations of the Health and Wellbeing Board to consider how they can individually and collaboratively respond to the Domestic Abuse Joint Strategic Needs Assessment recommendations.

1. Executive Summary:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Health and Wellbeing Board on the recommendations emerging from the Domestic Abuse Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (DA-JSNA) for 2021¹.
- 1.2 The DA- JSNA aims to provide an in-depth overview and understanding of domestic violence and abuse² (DVA) both nationally and across Warwickshire. It was developed primarily, to inform the review and recommissioning of Warwickshire's specialist Domestic Violence and Abuse accommodation and support service in 2021.
- 1.3 The DA-JSNA includes 38 recommendations which were approved by the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Board in September 2021 and the Safer Warwickshire Board (SWPB) in October 2021.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 None

¹ <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/joint-strategic-needs-assessments-1/thematic-needs-assessments-previous-annual-updates/1>

² The Government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: 'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening. behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have. been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. It includes physical or sexual abuse; violent or threatening behaviour; controlling or coercive behaviour; economic abuse and psychological or emotional

3. Environmental Implications

3.1 None

4. Supporting Information

Background to the DA-JSNA:

4.1 The DA-JSNA aims to provide an in-depth overview and understanding of domestic violence and abuse (DVA) both nationally and across Warwickshire. Whilst developed primarily to inform the review and recommissioning of the specialist DVA accommodation and support service, it also has the scope to inform and transform the wider provision of services to victim-survivors, their children, and perpetrators across Warwickshire.

4.2 The DA- JSNA has been developed and informed by the following:

- **Stakeholder events** – these were held with representatives from Local Housing Authorities, Criminal Justice agencies, Police, Third Sector providers, Health providers, DVA providers and advocates for victim-survivors.
- **Surveys** – A range of surveys were conducted with professionals, victim-survivors and the public.
- **Bespoke engagement** - WCC commissioned a bespoke piece of work via 'Equip'³ to engage with those from minoritised communities.
- **Data** – data and intelligence from a variety of both local and national sources was used.
- **Legislation and policy** – including the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and the Government's VAWG Strategy.
- **Best Practice** – regional and national best practice around DVA and models of delivery.
- **Domestic Abuse Joint Commissioning Partnership** – which included representatives from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Coventry and Warwickshire Clinical Commissioning Group and all local authorities across Warwickshire.

4.3 It has been considered and approved by the VAWG Board and SWPB.

³ Equip are Warwickshire's Equality and Inclusion Partnership.

5. Recommendations from the DA- JSNA:

5.1 There are 38 recommendations emerging from the DA- JSNA that the Health and Wellbeing Board are requested to endorse. These are as follows:

Partnerships:

- Partners associated with the Health and Wellbeing Board and Safer Warwickshire Board consider the Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment and determine how they will individually respond to the content and recommendations included within it.
- Provide those with lived experience the opportunities to influence and shape the development of services and strategies related to domestic violence and abuse (DVA) and VAWG.
- That all agencies across Warwickshire embed Routine Enquiry⁴ into DVA within their own procedures.
- That all Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) representatives have a working knowledge of relevant legislation e.g., Care Act 2014, Adult Safeguarding, and domestic abuse.
- Improve data collection in relation to those with protected characteristics to ensure a greater understanding and improved response to victim-survivors and perpetrators of DVA.
- Use the Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment as the basis for a new strategy to address DVA.
- All agencies to ensure they have a DVA workplace policy.

Children, young people (CYP) and families:

- Identify and respond to the support needs of CYP who have been a victim of, or experienced DVA by living in a household where it is taking place.
- Review the current provision of Relationships and Sex Education within schools to ensure it includes DVA awareness and that staff teams and CYP understand it and know how to access advice and support.
- Promote a wider understanding and develop responses to Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (ADVA).
- Prioritise the identification of alternatives to child removal and develop a trauma informed support offer for those who have had their children removed as a consequence of DVA.
- Provide services that support the psychological and behavioural needs of children who have witnessed DVA.
- Explore why more care leavers end up in abusive relationships; identifying and developing approaches to reduce this from happening.

⁴ Routine enquiry involves asking all individuals about domestic abuse regardless of whether there are any indicators or suspicions of abuse.

Communication:

- Ensure that the referral pathways into DVA services are widely communicated to statutory and third sector organisations, and members of the public.
- Develop coordinated communication and awareness raising campaigns (including website updates).

Training:

- Warwickshire Safeguarding Board to confirm what their expectations are in relation to training requirements of key agencies and roles on domestic abuse and risk assessment and safety planning.
- All agencies to review their current training offer on domestic abuse for staff and determine whether it meets their current and future needs.

Criminal Justice:

- Warwickshire Police to ensure that victim-survivors are made aware of the tools and powers available to address perpetrator behaviour and empower them to make their own decisions regarding this; keeping them informed of progress at all times.
- Develop a comprehensive DVA perpetrator offer and embed this throughout Warwickshire – ensuring that there are mechanisms in place to enable self-referral.
- Ensure that services who are supporting victim-survivors have up to date information regarding a perpetrator to ensure effective safety planning.
- Increase the number of sanctions deployed to address DVA perpetrator behaviour and monitor the outcomes.
- Explore options for operating a joint specialist DVA court across Coventry and Warwickshire; ensuring that Independent Domestic Violence Advocates' (IDVAs) capacity is linked directly into this provision.

Housing:

- Create a coordinated approach towards the provision of safe accommodation for DVA victim-survivors across the county that is accessible and open to all.
- Review temporary accommodation provision to ensure that female only spaces are created, where they do not currently exist.
- Review local housing allocations schemes to ensure that the consequences of being a victim-survivor of DVA (Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Criminal Damage, Rent Arrears, debt) do not present a barrier to appropriate rehousing; that this requirement is extended to Registered Social Landlords (RSL).
- Empower victim-survivors to make their own decisions regarding accommodation provision; ensuring that they are aware of the options available to remain in their own home, should they wish.

Health:

- Consider how patient records can be joined up across health care systems to improve the identification of, and responses to DVA.
- Drug and alcohol services to record data on DVA to provide holistic support and enriched recovery for service users.
- Develop a Dual Diagnosis protocol and pathway for those who have co-existing conditions of alcohol/ drug dependency, mental health needs and experience, or perpetrate DVA.
- Provide specialised, trauma information therapy for victim-survivors of DVA of all ages.
- Recognise the prevalence of DVA in pregnant women and those with young children, ensuring that maternity and health visiting staff are trained and able to facilitate disclosures, undertake risk assessments and safety plans.
- Recognise the prevalence of anxiety and depression in victim-survivors of DVA and ensure that GP's and their staff are trained and able to facilitate disclosures, undertake risk assessments and safety plans.

Service specific:

- Commission sustainable local services that provide dedicated provision for different victim-survivor groups; this includes those experiencing Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Sexual Violence, Forced Marriage, Harmful Practices, trafficking, exploitation, stalking and harassment.
- Commission DVA services that are accessible to victim-survivors from all backgrounds and monitor referrals and engagement with DVA services from marginalised and minoritised communities.
- Identify the barriers that prevent victim-survivors from seeking support from commissioned services. This includes both men and women, those over 65 and under 21 years, those with Gypsy and Traveller ethnicity, rural, marginalised and minoritised communities and those with disabilities (physical and mental).
- Ensure that appropriate Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) capacity is commissioned in line with Safelives recommendations.
- Develop an approach for DVA victim-survivors who have no recourse to public funding.

National:

- That the National Domestic Abuse Commissioner requires Third Sector providers and statutory agencies improve their responses to LGBTQ+ and male victim-survivors.

6. Timescales associated with the decision and next step

- 6.1 The VAWG Board have agreed that the recommendations will support the development of emerging strategies for Serious Violent Crime and VAWG.
- 6.2 The Health and Wellbeing Board are requested to endorse the recommendations of the DA-JSNA and encourage the member organisations to consider how the recommendations can be responded to.

Background Papers

N/A

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): none

Other members: Councillors Bell, Drew, Golby, Holland and Rolfe.