



WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

5 APRIL 2019

Performance Update – Domestic, Sexual and “Honour” based abuse

Introduction

This report aims to provide an overview of activity against delivery of the Police and Crime Plan. Each Police and Crime Panel meeting will focus on one priority from the Plan, looking at the five areas identified below. Additional briefing papers will be provided where applicable however this summary will pull together key information from the briefing papers under the relevant sections.

Background/Context

Tackling domestic and sexual abuse has been a priority of the PCC since first being elected in 2012. Other Police and Crime Plan related priorities are child sexual abuse and honour based abuse (HBA). All these are forms of domestic and sexual abuse and violence and it is important they are identified as such. The related issues of female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage and also included within HBA.

Below is the narrative from the PCC’s refreshed Police and Crime Plan 2016-2021:

Domestic Abuse:

‘Domestic abuse can happen to anyone, it can be financial, emotional physical or involve coercion and control. A quarter of respondents to our “Your Priorities, Your Plan” survey said that domestic abuse was a priority for them. These crimes should not be tolerated and work will continue across all partner agencies including the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Board to target offenders, challenge dangerous perceptions, raise awareness, encourage victims to come forward and support them when they do’

Sexual Abuse:

‘Sexual violence and abuse is any harmful sexual behaviour which is unwanted and takes place without consent or understanding. This type of crime can have a devastating effect on the person’s health and wellbeing. I will continue to work with the police and partners to target offenders, give victims the confidence to come forward and report these crimes, and make all forms of sexual abuse and violence unacceptable. I will continue to make sure that services for all victims of sexual abuse are available in West Yorkshire to support them to cope and recover.’

“Honour” based abuse:

“Honour” based abuse, including Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), are all abuses of individuals’ rights. Those affected are often some of the most vulnerable in our community and can find themselves in conflict with people they care about the most. Isolated from family and friends, they can feel like they have no one to turn to. For this reason it is crucial that these harmful practices are challenges and those affected can have the confidence in the police and criminal justice system that perpetrators will be brought to justice. Awareness of these crimes continues to increase but I will carry on

Progress and Key Challenges

2014 – Interim Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) provision commenced in April, allowing for full procurement of a SARC service during 2014/15 to start delivery from April 2015.

PCC spoke at a Leeds District conference on FGM organised by Black Health Initiative in Leeds during September 2014.

2015 – A review of current domestic abuse victims' services across West Yorkshire was undertaken by Nicola Hughes Consulting on behalf of the PCC. The final report was submitted during January 2015 with the findings being used to influence partnership working and delivery.

The PCC spoke at a Peacemaker International FGM Conference in Bradford during March and funding had been provided to this charity through the Safer Communities Fund for work on this issue during 2014.

A regional (Yorkshire and Humber) approach to the provision of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC), with the service being delivered by Mountain Healthcare started in April 2016 and is due to be re-commissioned from April 2021.

The PCC appointed a Temporary Safeguarding Co-coordinator to improve collaboration and partnership work which will be of direct benefit to victims and survivors of sexual violence and child abuse of all ages and a Victims Champion, with an initial focus on BME victims, to help address the issues underlying under-reporting.

A West Yorkshire wide Independent Sexual Violence Advise (ISVA) service was commissioned by the PCC and started delivery during July. Provided by Victim Support working in partnership with rape crisis centres and a number of other third sector organisation, as well as the interim SARC. For the first time this meant a consistent ISVA service available for all victims across West Yorkshire, including male victims.

During August the PCC hosted the first county wide partner event on FGM which was attended by over 90 delegates from at least 49 organisations. The focus of the event was to promote awareness raising of FGM and inform on the changing legislation around it; with an aim to identify how the PCC and partners can work together collectively to support FGM survivors.

Staff from the OPCC supported the Ruth for Women Domestic Violence and FGM event on 13th August 2015.

A formal response to the Home Office Consultation on Multi Agency Statutory Guidance for FGM, September 2015 was submitted by the PCC.

Utilising £1million funding from the PCC and working with representatives from the five Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), as part of a sub-group of the CSP Forum, a Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme was commissioned and the 'Choices' service was launched in September 2015 with a contract length of 2 years.

The existing sub group continued as a West Yorkshire Domestic Abuse Board, before incorporating sexual abuse within its remit and becoming a Domestic and Sexual Abuse Board in June 2017. Further details are in the additional information paper.

For the 16 days of action around domestic abuse the PCC and WYP launched a campaign specifically focused on the impact on children who witnessed domestic abuse, and encouraged the reporting of these offences.

2016 – The PCC and West Yorkshire Police supported the 6 February national awareness day on FGM.

Through SCF funding, Airedale Academy performing arts students created and performed a dance/drama production, made into DVD, to raise awareness of the relationship between alcohol and domestic abuse.

The 'Don't lose it all to football' campaign was launched ahead of the Euro 2016 tournament. Working with National Probation Services, Safer Leeds, the NHS and other local councils, leaflets and posters were distributed to pubs and clubs across West Yorkshire and displayed on big screen in city centres.

WYP received White Ribbon Accreditation to coincide with the 16 days of action against domestic abuse. A national campaign aimed at businesses and helping employees who may be victims of domestic was launched and ran an internal campaign urging staff to report or seek help if they too were a victim.

2017 – The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy was launched in Bradford during June, setting out a partnership action plan around the five areas of:

- Partnership working
- Prevention, early identification and early interventions in violence and abuse
- Provision of services
- Victim / survivor support
- Pursuing perpetrators to reduce re-offending
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A copy of the action plan is attached as Appendix A.

To coincide with the West Yorkshire Safeguarding Week, the PCC and WYP launched a focused campaign highlighting a lesser-known type of domestic abuse, the offence of coercive and controlling behaviour.

On the 5th October 2017 the PCC hosted a Safeguarding Conference which was the first event to bring together district Community Safety Partnerships, Adults Safeguarding Boards and Children's Safeguarding Boards from across West Yorkshire. This event asked partners to highlight what they're top priorities were and to generate some joint actions to provide more collaborative working.

On the 21st November 2017, the OPCC held a consultation event with key partners on the new SARC Building proposals. Colleagues to work closely with service users were invited to enable us to obtain feedback in relation to the building layout and user requirements from a victim, survivor, family member and witness perspective.

The 'There's No Excuse' campaign was used during the 16 Days of Action around domestic abuse (from 26 November) and focused on encouraging people with friends, family or colleagues who were experiencing or suspected victims of domestic abuse to seek help from the police and support agencies.

2018 – The 'Don't lose it all to football' campaign was again utilised to coincide with the World Cup tournament during the summer.

West Yorkshire Police was one of 14 police forces involved in supporting Operation Limelight during 24 August – 7 September. The activity in West Yorkshire focused on raising awareness of FGM amongst both staff and passengers at Leeds Bradford Airport.

As part of the 'Whole Systems Approach', during December, the PCC brought together professionals from the NHS, Crown Prosecution Service, Voluntary Sector, Educations

and Local Authorities to independently consider domestic abuse cases in the county. The WY Independent Domestic Scrutiny Panel meets four times per year and looks at previous cases to ensure the right practices and support mechanisms are in place.

2019 – During January WYP launched a new campaign encouraging anyone with concerns about a current or ex-partner to use the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, also known as Clare’s Law which has been available in WY since 2014.

Statistics: Details of the latest statistics on these issues is attached as Appendix B

Challenges: As recorded crime figures around domestic and sexual abuse continue to rise as a result of improved crime data integrity and increased confidence of victims to report incidents, there is a strategic risk that Safeguarding Units could become unable to cope with demand.

Capacity at court can lead to long wait times for cases to be heard and this can also have a negative impact on a victim’s willingness to proceed through the CJS.

Central funding for services such as IDVA’s continues to be a risk, and this is further impacted by increased workloads and instances where existing services cannot support every case.

There are still gaps in service provision across West Yorkshire both geographically and based on particular groups of victims. It is also clear that use of services by BAME communities is not representative of the demographics within the county.

Working with WYP and Partners

The Community Outcome Meetings (COM) between the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner focus on important policing and community safety issues which are of a high public interest. The aim is to offer greater transparency to communities on how the PCC holds the Chief Constable to account on these important issues.

A reports on domestic and sexual abuse is received twice yearly at COM as part of an agenda focused on the Plan outcome to ‘safeguard vulnerable people’, with the latest being discussed on 18 June 2018 as part of a wider Safeguarding report on CSE, Sexual Abuse and Domestic Abuse.

At this meeting discussion and questions from the PCC focused on the below areas:

- Further detail on the number of sexual offences being committed
- The safeguarding steps being taken with regards to child witnesses of domestic abuse
- Use and successes relating to the IDVA cars and Domestic Violence Protection Orders.
- Whether body worn camera footage was supportive in domestic abuse cases
- Ongoing work to encourage male victims of domestic or sexual abuse to report and come forward and whether there were gaps in the support available for these victims

At this meeting there was also a paper on “Honour” based abuse and the discussion and questions focused on:

- Further detail on the joint police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) focus group which met for the second time in May
- The N8 Policing Research bid discussed in the report, and whether there was a timeline for this work
- How the intelligence report mentioned in the report was being promoted or communicated to partners outside of WYP

The reports and minutes are published on the PCC’s website.

Aims and Future Delivery

The Priority Plans for domestic abuse, sexual abuse and honour based abuse are attached as Appendix C. These plans will be refreshed, renewed and are work in progress but we will report on our delivery against these Priority Plans in public facing Community Outcomes Meetings and as part of discussion at Delivery Quarterly meetings between the PCC and Chief Officer Team at WYP.

The OPCC Plans for the future are to:

- Continue to work with partners on delivery of the action plan
- Launch of the new ISVA service from April 2019
- Commission a review of sexual abuse services for victims and survivors
- Look to commission a Perpetrator Programme for standard risk offenders
- Recommission the SARC by April 2021

Resources and Funding

The PCCs Safer Communities Fund has in total funded 130 projects to the value of £623,000 that specifically address domestic, sexual and honour based abuse.

This can be broken down to:

- Domestic/Sexual Abuse – 109 projects totalling £521,000
- HBA, Forced Marriage and FGM – 21 projects totalling £102,000

However, many more SCF projects with a focus on safeguarding vulnerable people are likely to tackle this issue, although these are not specified as part of the application process due to how the application form is completed.

- The PCC has funded Survivor UK through the Victims Services Preparatory Grant (VSPG). He has maintained funding levels as money previously provided by the MoJ comes to an end.
- The PCC provides core grants to the three rape support centres in West Yorkshire, and the provision of additional funding to the Kirklees centre to provide services to Calderdale. These grants have just been renewed for 2019/20.
- The PCC has provided funding to the ISVA service based at New Hall Prison provided by the Calderdale based WomenCentre, to match Home Office funding.

Funding provided during 2018/19 has included:

- West Yorkshire ISVA Service - £319,672
- Domestic Violence Services (Bradford) to provide IDVA services - £100,118
- Bradford Rape Crisis to provide support for victims of sexual violence - £50,000
- Leeds Rape Crisis to provide support for victims of sexual violence - £50,000
- Kirklees and Calderdale Rape Crisis to support victims of sexual violence - £59,000

Funding from the PCC's Partnership Executive Group Fund was provided for the:

- Affordable Legal Service - £105,000 delivered by Staying Put
- Domestic Abuse Navigator Service - £190,216 delivered by Wakefield MDC
- Regional MARAC Training for all districts - £2400

IDVA funding provision to each CSP - £25,000 each per annum, ongoing since 2015.