

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY**

To: Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014

From: Sarah Ferguson, Service Director: Enhanced and Preventative Services

**1.0 PURPOSE**

1.1 Organisations across Cambridgeshire work together as the Cambridgeshire Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership to deliver services for women, men and children whose lives are affected by domestic abuse. The Domestic Abuse Strategy is a strategic document that sets out how the Council and its partners will seek to reduce the harms associated with domestic abuse and prevent these crimes from occurring in Cambridgeshire. This strategy is built upon a thorough needs assessment and research. The recently revised Governance Board, chaired by the County Council's Executive Director: Children, Families and Adult Services has overseen the development of the strategy and will oversee the delivery of the strategy and the subsequent action plan being developed.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The strategy, in appendix 1, sets out how partners will deliver services to achieve three core objectives. Firstly to prevent people from becoming perpetrators or victims of domestic abuse. Secondly the strategy sets out how we will protect victims of domestic abuse and their families, whether or not they report crimes to the police. Third the strategy commits the Council to supporting the prosecution of perpetrators of domestic abuse so that they have to face up to the consequences of their actions. These objectives will be supported by cross-cutting work to develop a countywide offer that ensures a coordinated response to domestic abuse across these objectives.

2.2 The first objective is to prevent domestic abuse from occurring in the first place or to stop it from worsening. Work will take place through education and awareness-raising; support and advice for victims and perpetrators (or potential victims and perpetrators); and through improving the ways that organisations work together to identify abuse and stop it from happening.

2.3 The second objective describes activity that offers protection for victims and their families. This is often a complex process requiring inter agency work and occurs at all levels of the service model. The work will range from advice and signposting at level one through to intensive work with individuals who face the highest levels of risk.

2.4 The third objective is concerned with how perpetrators of domestic abuse are dealt with by the police and through the criminal justice system. Seeking prosecution is central to the aims of the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence partnership in Cambridgeshire. We want to pursue perpetrators of domestic abuse through the criminal justice system and work to promote rehabilitation and prevent reoffending. Domestic abuse accounts for 7% of all recorded crime in Cambridgeshire. In the 12 months to the end of August 2013, Cambridgeshire Constabulary recorded 2,927 domestic abuse related crimes. Of those, 37% resulted in a charge; 9% resulted in a caution; and 2% had an out of court disposal.

2.5 The strategy has been developed in the context of recent inspections including an HMIC inspection of domestic abuse services within the Police, and of the Ofsted inspection of the Local Authority’s Safeguarding arrangements in June 2014. It is timely in advancing our shared ambitions across the Partnership to continue to strengthen our service offer

**3.0 ALIGNMENT WITH THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY**

3.1 Domestic Abuse is a priority for the Health and Wellbeing Board. Dr Liz Robin, Director of Public Health also attends the Governance Board. Domestic abuse can have a long term impact upon the health of the public. The cycle of abuse can be inter-generational and the effects upon the emotional health and wellbeing of children can be adversely affected by witnessing or experiencing domestic abuse. This can lead to poor long term outcomes such as mental health issues, poor attainment, stress and violence in intimate relationships..

**4.0 IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The provision of domestic abuse services sits within a context of high risk with the ultimate end of the prevention of serious harm or homicide. Therefore the strength of services is predicated upon effective multi agency arrangements, information sharing and resource allocation.

**5.0 RECOMMENDATION/DECISION REQUIRED**

5.1 The Board is asked to offer comments on the Domestic Abuse Strategy and to note the direction of travel the strategy sets for the Cambridgeshire Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership.

Source Documents	Location
<p><i>Domestic Abuse Strategy – appendix 1</i>  <i>Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment</i></p>	<p>Ground floor B wing,            Castle Court,            Cambridge</p>



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE**  
DOMESTIC ABUSE & SEXUAL  
VIOLENCE PARTNERSHIP

# **Domestic Abuse Strategy 2014-2018**

**Draft version 0.9 – 15 September 2014**

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## Our vision

Domestic abuse cannot be ignored. It is common: an estimated 18,220 women in Cambridgeshire and 12,500 men were victims of domestic abuse in Cambridgeshire in 2012/13. Domestic abuse destroys lives and poses a serious risk to victims – 47% of women who are killed are killed by a current or ex-partner. Domestic abuse also impacts on children, who are victims, witnesses or offenders in just over half of all domestic abuse incidents in the country – rising to over 80% of high risk cases.

**Our vision is to reduce the harms associated with domestic abuse, and prevent these crimes from occurring across Cambridgeshire.** This strategy sets out how:

- We will prevent people from becoming perpetrators and victims of domestic abuse
- We will protect victims of domestic abuse and their families, whether or not they choose to report crimes to the police
- We will pursue perpetrators of domestic abuse through the criminal justice system and ensure that they face the consequences of their actions
- We will support victims to recover from the impact of domestic abuse

Our partnership has adopted the Government's definition of domestic abuse, which 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. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.*

## Where are we now?

In the past 18 months, the Local Safeguarding Children Board has completed an exercise to map across the county the responses and interventions offered to Children and young people affected by Domestic Abuse and violence against women and girls by schools; localities; children's social care; health visiting; school nursing; CAMH and the voluntary sector<sup>1</sup>; and this work has been supplemented by a further mapping exercise considering service provision for adults affected by domestic abuse<sup>2</sup>. In addition, a recently published Needs Assessment<sup>3</sup> into Domestic Abuse provides a comprehensive overview of incidents of domestic abuse in the county in 2012/13. The following key findings have influenced development of the strategy.

### **The majority of those affected by domestic violence or abuse do not report their experiences to the police.**

It is difficult to predict how many people in Cambridgeshire are victims of domestic abuse. Each organisation sees different parts of the picture. An estimated volume of 5,080 individuals reported domestic abuse to the Constabulary in 2012/13; however, national figures show that only 23% of victims had reported their experiences to the police. Crime survey data suggests that 18,220 adult females and 12,459 adult males became victims of domestic violence or abuse in Cambridgeshire in 2012/13. Partner agencies currently play a key role in addressing violence or abuse whether that violence or abuse is reported to the police or not. Specialist voluntary sector providers (Cambridge Women's Aid and Refuge) supported almost 1,000 victims in 2012/13. But it is likely that the majority of abuse remains hidden and that most cases are unknown to any of our organisations.

### **Different domestic abuse cases carry different levels of risk to individuals and their families**

Higher risk cases handled by police and partners are referred to the Cambridgeshire Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (operated by Cambridgeshire County Council). In 2012/13, the IDVA service received 1,129 referrals from the Constabulary and other partner organisations. 81% of these chose to engage with the service. However, those deemed to be at high-risk of homicide do not always wish to engage with a specialist support service, for reasons including the presence of children, love or feelings for their partner, or having nowhere to go

The cases carrying the highest levels of risk are referred to Cambridgeshire's Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). In 2012/13 MARAC heard a combined 353 very-high risk adult cases; these cases involved 502 children.

The types of domestic abuse reported by men and women differ significantly, and local figures suggest that women are far more likely to suffer severe violence and risk of homicide in Cambridgeshire than men.

### **Whilst many cases of domestic abuse occur in situations where no children are present, the numbers of children in high-risk situations may be close to the number of adults affected.**

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <http://www.cambslscb.org.uk>

<sup>2</sup> Available from:  
[http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20004/health\\_and\\_keeping\\_well/542/domestic\\_abuse\\_and\\_sexual\\_violence](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20004/health_and_keeping_well/542/domestic_abuse_and_sexual_violence)

<sup>3</sup> Also available from  
[http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20004/health\\_and\\_keeping\\_well/542/domestic\\_abuse\\_and\\_sexual\\_violence](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20004/health_and_keeping_well/542/domestic_abuse_and_sexual_violence)

The 946 people accessing outreach provision from Cambridge Women's Aid and Refuge in 2012/13 between them had 883 children. In 2013/14, sixty-five children were given safe accommodation alongside their mother/carer by Cambridge Women's Aid; and Refuges in Cambridgeshire supported 74 children, all aged 11 or under. These are only the cases for which statistics are available, and numbers will be much higher. Whereas traditionally domestic abuse services have focused on a victim and offender dynamic, the sheer number of children involved in high risk cases demonstrates the need to consider domestic abuse from the point of view of the whole family when children are present. This does not mean support should be focused on keeping the family together if it is not safe to do so; but the welfare of victims and their children should be considered together.

**Service mapping suggests that there are gaps in provision for specific groups and in different areas of the county.**

This is reflected in the findings of recent mapping work which investigated gaps in domestic abuse provision. Whilst in general it was found that high risk services for victims were in place and countywide and working well, a number of specific gaps existed. These include:

- a lack of availability of specialist intervention for families – in particular services that consider children and young people together with their protective parent
- a lack of availability of programmes for men who use violence in their relationships to support men who want to stop committing domestic abuse
- the lack of coordination between services, which led to gaps in provision in between different areas. It was recommended that the creation of a 'countywide offer' – a minimum level of provision that would be available to any victims, offenders or their families regardless of their location – would assist in closing gaps in provision.

# Our approach to tackling domestic abuse

## Multiple perspectives

In Cambridgeshire, we adopt a partnership approach to tackling domestic abuse. Each partner brings a unique perspective to this issue, which is important because as demonstrated above, Domestic Abuse is about more than recorded crime figures. It can be considered from a number of different perspectives, including:

- The victims' perspective – which includes safeguarding the victim by providing them with the necessary tools and knowledge for them to decide on what is best for them (and their children if they have them). This offers long-term protection and recovery to the individual. Children who are witnesses to domestic abuse are also seen as victims.
- A criminal justice perspective, which focuses on pursuing offenders through the courts. This provides a sense of justice and protects other family members
- A rehabilitative perspective, which focuses on re-education for the perpetrator in order to prevent future abuse from occurring
- A family perspective which seeks to keep a family together where safe to do so, in order to provide a stable and safe environment for any children
- A health and wellbeing perspective, addressing any mental or physical health issues associated with abuse.

An individual involved in domestic abuse should not be considered under any one of these perspectives in isolation; multiple perspectives will be appropriate in approaching each case at different times. Recognising this is important to coordinating the response of the whole partnership to domestic abuse. Considered together, these perspectives offer real strength to our partnership; and can ensure that responses consider a more complete picture of the lives of victims, perpetrators and children. Achieving our vision will require a coordinated effort between all organisations working with those affected by domestic abuse.

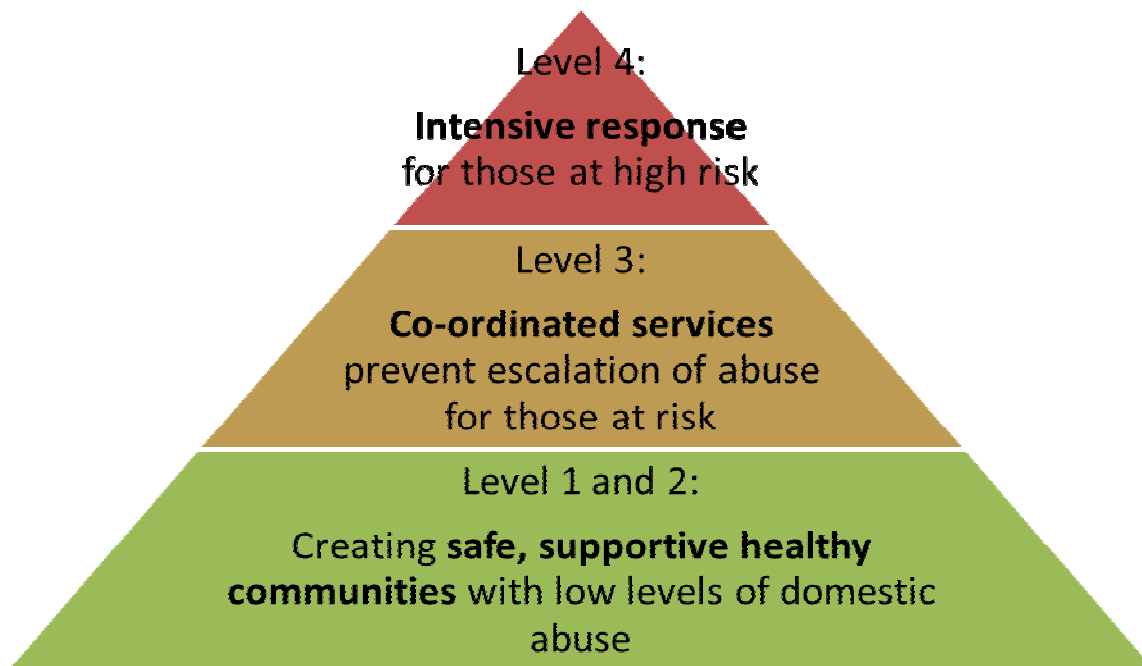
## Levels of response

Not every case of domestic abuse needs the same response – varying degrees and types of support are needed from different organisations depending on the circumstances of the individual victim, family or perpetrator. Prevention of abuse is also important – how we create strong and supportive communities where domestic abuse is seen as unacceptable to all.

Our different responses to domestic abuse happen at three distinct levels, as demonstrated in the diagram below. This provides a 'Model of Staged Intervention for Domestic Abuse', drawing on the Model of Staged Intervention (MOSI) used by the County Council; The Victim and Offender Strategies from the Police and Crime Commissioner; and the County Council's emerging approach to Early Help.

This model provides a framework for developing a common understanding of people's needs; and a shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities of different services and organisations.

## Model of staged intervention for domestic abuse



These levels are about prevention, lowering risk and managing demand on our more intensive services. The aim is to ensure that there are fewer people in the higher levels, receiving more targeted, intensive support. Early help as soon as need is identified is preferable to 'late help' when problems have escalated; but intensive safeguarding and support is always available to those that need it. Getting this right requires us to build capacity in communities to support people to help themselves; as well as creating effective, coordinated pathways and referrals between organisations, which will be developed as part of the action plan for this strategy. The levels can be summarised as follows:

At level 1, we want to build **safe, supportive and healthy communities** with low rates of domestic abuse. In safe, supportive and healthy communities, communities have the capacity to support themselves, and the number of victims is reduced; with a wide range of agencies playing a part in empowering communities and delivering preventative work; there are high levels of confidence in policing; and communities are engaged with high numbers of witnesses prepared to come forward. Level 1 refers to support available within families and communities without the involvement of the public sector. This community action is supported by level 2 services, which work to build protective factors into communities – for example by educating people about what constitutes domestic abuse; and educating children and young people about healthy relationships.

Where domestic abuse occurs, we want to ensure that **co-ordinated services** are available early on that prevent escalation of abuse for people at risk – both for the victims and any dependent children and ensure that people are aware of what is available within their own communities. Whether or not people choose to engage with these services, or report abuse to the police, services will respond proportionately and provide clear pathways to the victim that will reduce risk according to their individual wishes: whether that is to leave the household; stay at home; or whether the offender is willing to engage with a rehabilitative approach. When the abuse has ended, support will be available to those that need it to promote recovery for them and their family.



For those cases with the highest level of risk, our organisations will provide an **intensive response** in a coordinated manner, to address the immediate risk and protect victims and families urgently, stepping back once the immediate situation is resolved but ensuring that victims and families have immediate access to further support if needed.

## Types of response

In order to address each of the perspectives on domestic abuse; and to respond appropriately at different levels, there are four main areas of work that our partnership organisations will undertake. This strategy explores each of these areas in turn to identify what changes are needed in each:

- We will **prevent** people from becoming perpetrators or victims of domestic abuse
- We will **protect** victims of domestic abuse and their children, whether or not they choose to report crimes to the police
- We will **pursue** perpetrators of domestic abuse through the criminal justice system and ensure that they face up to the implications of their actions
- We will support victims to **recover** from the consequences of domestic abuse.

These objectives will be supported by cross-cutting work to develop a **countywide offer** that ensures a coordinated response to domestic abuse. Our current countywide offer could be mapped against the above priorities, and levels of response, as follows:

Level	Prevent	Protect	Pursue	Recover
<b>Levels 1 and 2</b>	Work in schools and communities; Outreach work commissioned from the voluntary sector; Advice, information and signposting	Advice, information and signposting	Raising awareness of domestic abuse and encouraging reporting to police	Community peer support groups
<b>Level 3</b>		Freedom programmes IDVA service		
<b>Level 4</b>	Work with perpetrators on building better relationships and reducing reoffending	MARAC Refuge accommodation Police attendance at emergency incidents	Charges, cautions and prosecutions through the criminal justice system	Phoenix programmes

# **We will prevent people from becoming perpetrators or victims of domestic abuse**

## **Summary of objective**

We want to prevent domestic abuse from occurring, and stop it from worsening. This may be through education and awareness-raising; support and advice for victims and perpetrators (or potential victims and perpetrators); and through improving the ways that organisations work together to identify abuse and stop it from happening. Many preventative services operate at levels 1 and 2 of the MOSI – they are universal services aimed at raising awareness and providing broad support. However, there is also significant targeted and intensive work that seeks to prevent future offending – notably programmes for perpetrators available through the probation service which seeks to prevent offenders from committing abuse in future relationships.

Current preventative services include:

- Work in schools and communities to raise awareness of what constitutes abuse and promote understanding of healthy relationships
- Work commissioned through Refuge and Cambridge Women's Aid to provide outreach to victims seeking support in the community
- Advice and information available through programmes operated by the County Council, including signposting by family workers and information available from children's centres.
- Work with perpetrators through the Probation Service, on building better relationships and reducing the likelihood of reoffending in future relationships

## **Areas for development**

Through this strategy, we will:

- Integrate messages around domestic abuse into parenting programmes.
- Ensure that workers across public services are able to identify potential victims of domestic abuse and are able to signpost and refer to appropriate services; for example through adoption of a new modular training package based on the NICE guidance on domestic abuse
- Work in partnership with schools to ensure that messages around healthy relationships are well integrated into PSHE lessons at schools, including targeted healthy relationship classes in secondary schools.
- Place a greater emphasis on education for communities into what constitutes abuse; and what support is available. For example, through the continued countywide poster, radio and social media campaign operating in line with central government's VAWG strategy.
- Review available perpetrator programmes to consider how they could be better incorporated into the Cambridgeshire offer.

## **How will we measure our success?**

If we are successful in this objective, we expect to see:

- Lower Crime Survey estimates of Domestic Abuse
- Greater reporting of domestic abuse to police

Although these two measures taken together may appear to contradict each other, they are in fact compatible. Our preventative work will lower the overall instances of domestic abuse, leading to lower self-reporting in the Crime Survey (which is thought to be a more accurate reflection of overall numbers). However at the same time, it will raise awareness of what constitutes abuse and reduce tolerance of abuse; therefore whilst the overall level is lower, the % of abuse reported to police (and thus the overall number of police reports) will increase.

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# **We will protect victims of domestic abuse and their children, whether or not they choose to report crimes to the police.**

## **Summary of objective**

Protection for victims and their families is complex and occurs at all levels of the service model, from advice and signposting at level one through to intensive work with individuals at risk at the highest level.

Provision for adults includes:

- Freedom Programmes, designed to enable those at risk to identify and manage violence and abusive behaviour
- Independent advocacy, advice and safety planning provided to victims at risk by the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (IDVAS).
- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences to support high risk victims through multi-agency information sharing, risk assessment and safety planning
- Refuge and Women's Aid floating support and outreach services to victims seeking support
- Refuge accommodation commissioned from Refuge (Wisbech and St Neots) and Cambridge Women's Aid (Cambridge City) to provide refuge for those fleeing severe domestic violence
- Police attendance at emergency incidents to offer protection from immediate danger, arresting the abuser if there is good reason to suspect that an assault has taken place

When victims of domestic abuse have children, protection of those children is equally important as protection for the victim. This provides challenges for services in working with a family where domestic abuse is occurring. The County Council's social care units focus on reducing risks within the family and creating some safety. Babies and small children are particularly vulnerable to harm through experiencing domestic violence or from hearing or seeing violence. An intervention is necessary for social care in circumstances where the perpetrator refuses to cease violence or controlling behaviour; this may involve the perpetrator leaving the family home; victim and children moving together to a safe place; or children leaving to be cared for elsewhere where their safety can be guaranteed. Housing is a key concern in these circumstances, and a supportive approach from housing providers is crucial. Support for young people is also available through the Young Person's IDVA, who addresses issues of 'teen dating violence' across the county. The post manages risk to the victim through a range of interventions including safety planning, raising awareness of risks, advocating for victims with other agencies and supporting bespoke / group work within the Freedom Programme and the Phoenix Programme for young women.

## **Areas for development**

Through this strategy, we will:

- Provide new specialist interventions for children and young people affected as direct or indirect victims of domestic abuse, including examining expansion of the young people's IDVA role;
- Develop approaches to specialist intervention for families – in particular services that consider children and young people together with their protective parent
- Carry out more work with young people who are perpetrators of domestic abuse to challenge their behaviour and ensure that it does not begin a pattern of violence which continues into future relationships;
- Include domestic abuse as a key priority in our Together for Families programme, in order to expand awareness of the 'think family' approach, which brings many agencies together to work with families with multiple needs; and gives families clear and positive goals to work towards, allowing them to succeed in independence.
- Commit to working in partnership with strategic housing and social housing providers to review policies, initiatives and current working practices across all levels of need, to ensure early identification and consistency of housing approach to victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse across the County.
- Address inconsistent provision across the county in specialist domestic abuse services; for example we will review the availability of refuge provision, Freedom programmes and Phoenix programmes across the county.
- Work to develop clear policies on the best approach for all partners to take to working with families where domestic abuse is occurring

### **How will we measure our success?**

If we are successful in this objective, we expect to see:

- More people engaged in protective services such as the IDVA
- Decreases in 'negative' repeat incident reports to the police
- Increased 'positive' repeat incident reports to police

Further performance measures are to be developed for this area.

# **We will pursue perpetrators of domestic abuse through the criminal justice system and ensure that they face up to the implications of their actions**

## **Summary of objective**

How perpetrators of domestic abuse are dealt with by police and through the criminal justice system is central to the aims of the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence partnership in Cambridgeshire. We want to pursue perpetrators of domestic abuse through the criminal justice system, and work to promote rehabilitation and prevent reoffending. Domestic abuse accounts for 7% of all recorded crime in Cambridgeshire. In the 12 months to the end of August 2013, Cambridgeshire Constabulary recorded 2,927 domestic abuse related crimes. Of those, 37% resulted in a charge; 9% resulted in a caution; and 2% had an out of court disposal. As stated in the county's draft strategic vision *Transforming our approach to offending*, we must maximise outcomes by ensuring that "every contact counts" as offenders are managed across the system. Pursuing people through a formal prosecution is just one option available to the system and our focus should be on preventing offending in the first place; and more targeted work to reduce further offending once people are identified. Nevertheless, investigation and prosecution are essential to ensuring justice is served and we will focus on improving the rate of cautions, prosecutions and convictions.

## **Areas for development**

Through this strategy, we will:

- Ensure that partners' processes and procedures support investigation and prosecution if necessary at every contact. For example, we will ensure that Constabulary incident logs contain more detailed information; this will ensure that details are captured for later investigation and evidence.
- Continue to support increased reporting of domestic abuse; for example by making clear information available to victims and potential victims on how the criminal justice system works and the support available if a crime is reported.
- We will ensure a consistent approach to domestic abuse incidents, even if a prosecution may not take place; for example following robust investigative procedures even if victims do not want to pursue a prosecution.
- Ensure that when a caution is the best possible response, that as part of the caution criteria a perpetrator should have to attend an 'input' and face up to Domestic Abuse as well as the underlying issues that made them offend.
- Ensure that full use is made of offender interventions to support the rehabilitation of persistent convicted perpetrators in all appropriate cases

## **How will we measure our success?**

If we are successful in this objective, we expect to see:

- Increased charges, convictions and cautions for domestic abuse
- Maintaining successful completions of referrals to offender interventions.

Further performance measures are to be developed for this area.

# **We will support victims to recover from the consequences of domestic abuse**

## **Summary of objective**

When an abusive situation has ended, victims and their children often need support to recover and live their lives independently. Domestic abuse can also have a lasting impact on the self-confidence and life chances of children who are direct or indirect victims of domestic abuse.

There is also a growing understanding at a national and local level of the significant links between mental health and domestic violence / abuse victimisation, with national research suggesting that half of women in contact with mental health services have suffered abuse or violence; and that domestic abuse is a significant factor in many suicide attempts and amongst people attending A&E as a result of self-harm.

However, with appropriate support, it is clear that victims can go on to live independently, and without domestic abuse impacting significantly on quality of life or life chances.

Whilst there is provision across the county, much of this has developed organically, and there are gaps in support available countywide. A number of 'Phoenix Programmes' are commissioned across the county, which are designed to facilitate recovery from an abusive relationship; but more needs to be done to develop further provision.

## **Areas for development**

Through this strategy, we will:

- Review services reporting recovery available countywide through a mapping report and consultation, in order to ensure that valuable services such as Phoenix programmes and peer support groups that help past victims to support others are widely available;
- Review access to mental health support for victims of domestic abuse in line with the findings of the Needs Assessment;
- Ensure that all victims are enabled to continue to live independently, feeling safe; for example through continued support for the Cambridgeshire 'Bobby' scheme which is facilitated by the Cambridgeshire Police Shrievally Trust, and works with partner agencies to secure the homes of victims of domestic violence / abuse, and so prevent potential homelessness.

## **How will we measure our success?**

Performance measures are to be developed for this area as part of the action planning process.

## Developing a countywide offer

All of our organisations make a valuable contribution to tackling domestic abuse, and in recent years we have increasingly worked together to provide services and support. We want to further improve the way that we work together, in order to address gaps in service provision; reduce the risk of serious harm to victims of domestic abuse and their families; whilst providing a cost effective service to all tax payers.

Issues in the way partners work together that were identified by the recent service mapping exercise included a lack of coordination between services, leading to gaps in provision in between different areas. It was recommended that the creation of a 'countywide offer' – a minimum level of provision that would be available to any victims, offenders or their families regardless of their location – would assist in closing gaps in provision.

To develop this countywide offer, a significant increase in coordination between services is needed. Since 2011, Cambridgeshire has had a Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU). The MARU is a partnership approach to:

- Early identification and understanding of risk;
- Victim identification and intervention;
- Harm identification and reduction.

The fundamental purpose of the MARU is to contribute to improved outcomes for safeguarding children and adults within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough through collaboration and close integration of services and processes. This is to be achieved through an approach that believes that safeguarding of the most vulnerable is a shared responsibility. The MARU strengthens the gathering and sharing of information held by various agencies and organisations, informing and formulating a multi-agency risk assessment of each case. The purpose of this unit is to process, assess and share information with relevant partner agencies.

There is recognition amongst partners that the MARU has made a significant contribution to partnership working in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and that the close working enabled by colocation has improved services; partners have also taken the opportunity to more closely align strategic objectives, with safeguarding being viewed as the first priority by all organisations. There is a desire to review structures in the context of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, allowing more flexibility, for example by enabling employees from one organisation to report to employees from another, if this will improve arrangements on the ground.

Partners have agreed to develop a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub in Cambridgeshire, in order to strengthen coordination. The shift to this new arrangement will be overseen by the Domestic Abuse Governance Board. It is expected that the MASH will deliver improvements in the following areas:

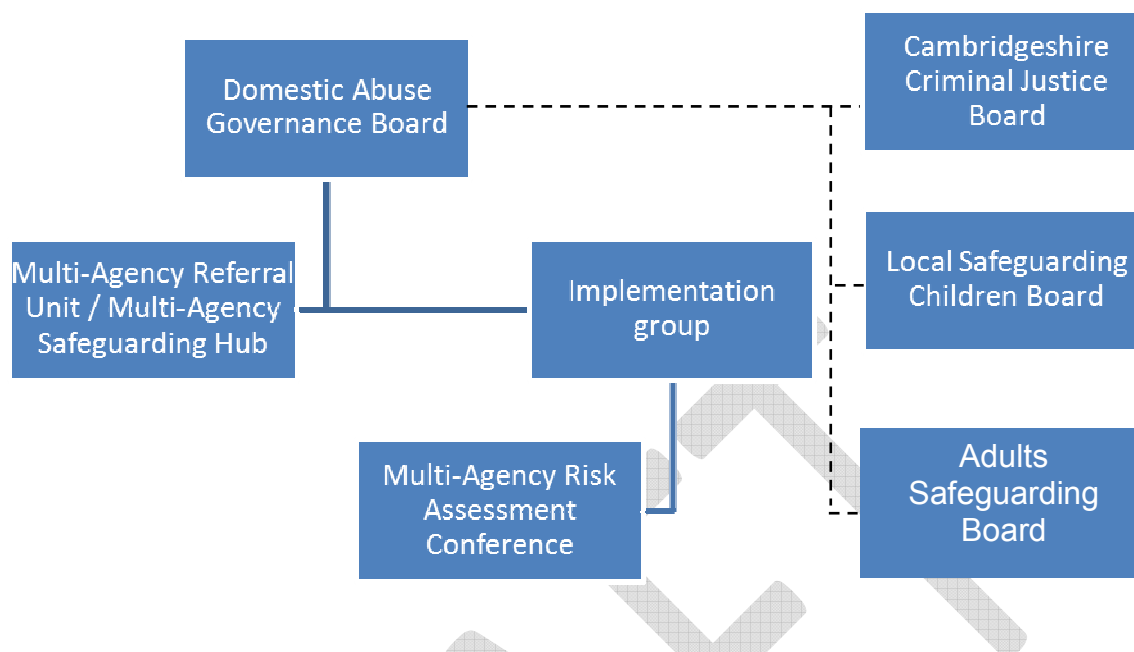
- **Coordinated pathways:** We will review interactions between our services to ensure that pathways for service users are clear and support the MOSI approach; particularly where they are making use of services from more than one organisation
- **Workforce development:** We will ensure that there is training available to staff across our organisations to help those on the front-line to recognise potential signs of abuse and respond accordingly



- **Information and intelligence sharing:** We will explore how we can better share information and intelligence on victims, potential victims, perpetrators and potential perpetrators, whilst respecting individual privacy.
- **Joined-up governance:** We will continue to develop the Governance Board to ensure it provides valuable oversight of domestic abuse services, including combined spending on domestic abuse; particularly in those areas where joint commissioning is taking place

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## Delivery and implementation



### How will we know we have been successful?

Possible performance measures are included in the sections above. We will publish an action plan within three months of the publication of this strategy, which will clearly set out the responsibilities of each organisation towards delivering the goals of the strategy; making it clear what success looks like and the measures we will use to monitor performance.

Delivery will be overseen by the multi-agency 'Implementation group'. Task and finish groups will be established and overseen by the implementation board where necessary.

The Implementation Board will propose performance measures to be reported to each meeting of the Domestic Abuse Governance Board, which will span all services and areas of the strategy.

The Governance Board will review progress against the strategy at least once each year, refreshing the strategy as necessary.

## Strategic links

The following Cambridgeshire strategies have an important influence on our strategic approach to dealing with domestic abuse.

### Health and wellbeing

The Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board has identified as one of its priorities to 'Create a safe environment and help to build strong communities, wellbeing and mental health'. Under this priority, the Board says that it will work with local partners 'to prevent domestic violence, raise public awareness especially amongst vulnerable groups, and provide appropriate support and services for victims of domestic abuse'.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has in 2014 issued guidelines relating to domestic abuse as it affects health and wellbeing; describing effective interventions. These will be considered in developing the Action plan for this strategy.

### Early Help

The County Council's Draft Early Help Strategy emphasises the need for the right family and community support to be in place before support from public sector agencies is needed. It emphasises preventative and timely intervention work with families, and aims to stop problems deepening, to prevent families from experiencing crises and ultimately to reduce the need for specialist and statutory interventions later down the line. The early help approach is central across the range of needs amongst children and families. The principle applies equally to safeguarding work, family functioning, family health and mental health, work to support inclusion, educational achievement, special educational needs, further learning and employment prospects and issues such as poverty, offending and substance misuse. The draft Early Help principles will underpin the design of support across services for children. They are that our strategy should:

1. Be based and designed within communities
2. Support families as a whole, building on their strengths and creating resilience
3. Be joined up and coherent across organisations and sectors
4. Be flexible and creative, helping families with a wide range of issues
5. Offer clear targeted support to the right families and demonstrate impact and evidence
6. Provide a seamless interface with specialist services where required.

### Police and Crime Commissioner

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Cambridgeshire has set out a vision, in conjunction with the PCCs for Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Hertfordshire, to transform the approach to offenders and support for victims across the four counties. The two strategies will have a significant impact on the approach of the partnership to domestic abuse support. For victims, the aim of the PCC is to:

- Enable all victims (direct and indirect such as parents, siblings, children, partners and close friends) of crime to cope and recover (not just those who report crime)

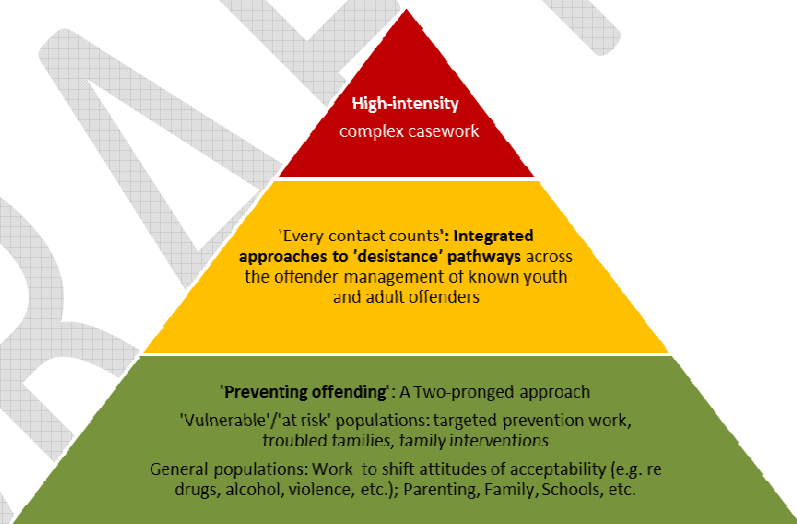
- Ensure budgets and resources available to support victims are used as efficiently and effectively as possible.
- Support the creation of communities with low crime rates and therefore a reduction in the number of victims, high levels of confidence in policing and engaged communities with high numbers of witnesses.

This will inform our approach to promoting the victims **ability to cope and recover** from the abuse they have suffered, as described in the strategic framework above. In transforming our approach to offending, the PCC has three goals:

- To effectively prevent the next generation of offenders;
- Transforming rehabilitation, to stop the ‘revolving door’ of re-offending through a genuinely integrated approach to offender management which effectively manages the risk to our local communities;
- To tackle much more effectively the small minority of highly prolific offenders who cause a disproportionate amount of crime in their communities.

The Offender strategy provides a ‘BeNCH’ model which describes three levels of intervention:

- Preventing offending (green)
- Integrated approaches to ‘desistance’
- High intensity complex casework



This recognises that the most effective way to reduce crime is to prevent individuals from commencing a pattern of offending in the first place; and that attempts must be made to focus efforts and resources on reducing offending. Once offenders are identified formally within the criminal justice system, the priority is on achieving a reduction or elimination of re-offending. Finally, it promotes targeted working for the small number of offenders who present offending patterns which are highly prolific and damaging.

This approach to offending will be considered in development of actions relating to **prevent** and **pursue** in the Domestic Abuse Strategy Action Plan. It is also reflected in our whole approach to domestic abuse through the development of a Cambridgeshire offer using the MOSI approach.

### Other related strategies

- **Adult Safeguarding**
- **Drug and alcohol action team strategy**
- **Others:**

## Action plan

**Template – to be developed following sign off by the Governance Board**

**Prevent:** We will prevent people from becoming perpetrators or victims of domestic abuse

Area for development	Action	Lead organisation	Milestones	Performance measure

**Protect:** We will protect victims of domestic abuse and their children, whether or not they choose to report crimes to the police

Area for development	Action	Lead organisation	Milestones	Performance measure

**Pursue:** We will pursue perpetrators of domestic abuse through the criminal justice system and ensure that they face up to the implications of their actions

Area for development	Action	Lead organisation	Milestones	Performance measure

**Recover:** We will support victims to recover from the consequences of domestic abuse

Area for development	Action	Lead organisation	Milestones	Performance measure