

25 November 2014

Agenda Item: 6

## **REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

### **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT ON SEXUAL ABUSE**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To inform Members about the incidence and impact of sexual abuse in Nottinghamshire as described in the 2014 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on Sexual Abuse (JSNA).
- 2 To provide Members with an opportunity to comment on the recommendations contained in this JSNA.

#### **Information and Advice**

- 3 Nottinghamshire County Council Public Health Team is responsible for updating the Nottinghamshire JSNA on a regular basis. For the first time in 2014 a chapter on Sexual Abuse has been included in the Needs Assessment. See attached appendix.
- 4 This Needs Assessment addresses:
  - Sexual abuse including rapes and assaults
  - Current and historical abuse
  - Adults and young people 13+.
- 5 It does not address:
  - Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation which are under the remit of the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children's Board

The main findings of the sexual abuse needs assessment are described below:

- 6 *Headline data on sexual violence and abuse taken from the Crime Survey England and Wales and Police Crime Recording*
  - Sexual abuse is known to be experienced by 19.1% of women and 2.7% of men over the course of their lives
  - 3% of women and 0.3% of men report an actual or attempted sexual assault in any one year.
  - The highest reported prevalence is against teenagers and young adults

- There has been a rise in disclosures of historical abuse in recent years. Known as the “*Savile Effect*”
- In 84% of serious assaults and rapes on women the perpetrator is known to the victim – the figure is 75% for males. This includes a clear overlap with domestic abuse where 30% of survivors disclose sexual violence or abuse from intimate partners.
- Only 1 in 10 actual crimes are reported to the Police (1 in 3 serious offences)
- Local district variations reflect the local violent crime profiles
- The prevalence of sexual abuse appears to be stable with increased reporting to Nottinghamshire Police of serious offences

## 7 *Why is this important?*

- There is a clear relationship between sexual abuse and poor mental health 20% in the abused population, compared to 6.3% in the general population
- There is also a relationship between sexual abuse and poor outcomes in relation to employment and education
- There is a heavy cost to the NHS – estimated in billions of pounds
- The Home Office estimates that the cost of violence against women and girls to society is around £36.7 billion

## 8 *Why is sexual abuse under-reported?*

<b><i>Outcome for Sexual Offences in Nottinghamshire in 2013</i></b>	
Estimated number Sexual Offences	5894
Reports to Police and SARC	613
Offenders charged	103
Successful prosecutions	78

- 9 This issue is clouded for many people by a culture of shame, secrecy and victim blaming. These cultural values are visible in the media and sometimes in the courts. Many people never disclose sexual abuse to anyone at all.
- 10 The public are aware of very low conviction rates and this affects the individual’s decision on whether to report a crime. There is general lack of confidence in the criminal justice system in relation to rape and sexual assault.
- 11 The resulting outcome is that many crimes are never reported and perpetrators are free to abuse again. For individuals keeping sexual abuse secret, there is an increased likelihood of long term health impact and therefore further costs to the NHS.

### *What are we offering survivors of sexual abuse?*

- 12 Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) to support women and men who decide to report a sexual offence. SARC is now commissioned by NHS England. The Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner is looking at staffing levels in the SARC which are below those of other SARCs in the region.

- Specialist Third Sector:

Nottingham Rape Crisis  
Incest and Sexual Assault Survivors  
Survivors Helping Each Other.

- 13 These projects offer support counselling, group therapy. They receive a total of £55,000 from the County Council so rely heavily on fundraising from elsewhere (Charitable Trusts and the Ministry of Justice) They are highly valued by their service users. They all report a large increase in demand in the last two years and all carry waiting lists for long term support.

- NHS Mental Health Services:

Psychological Therapies. There is no specialist sexual abuse service run by the NHS in Nottinghamshire so patients are referred to the third sector specialist projects described above

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service offers therapeutic support for young people with poor mental health many of whom are survivors of sexual violence and abuse

### *Evidence of what works*

- 14 The Needs Assessment was able to demonstrate that the following interventions, when delivered effectively, will have an impact on the prevalence of sexual abuse and/or the impact of sexual abuse on individuals:

- Education about healthy relationships, consent and protection
- Support services after sexual assault
- Direct enquiry to encourage disclosure
- Counselling and therapy for survivors of sexual abuse

- 15 *Some messages from survivors*

- Take the message to schools about sexual abuse
- Don't focus on the "stranger danger" message
- Recognise the severe impact of abuse and the need for on-going support
- There should be standard training across health care to recognise warning signs and know how to ask sensitively

## **The JSNA Recommendations**

- 16 Responsibility for implementing the recommendations in the JSNA lies with the Nottinghamshire Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive (DSA Exec) on behalf of the Safer Nottinghamshire Board and the Nottinghamshire Health and Well-Being Board. The DSA Exec brings together key partners to agree the strategic direction of work on domestic and sexual abuse in Nottinghamshire. It was created to provide a single focus for partnership development across the health, criminal justice and safeguarding agendas, each of which play a significant role in responding to domestic and sexual abuse. The DSA Exec also has an overview of the implementation and evaluation of services.
- 17 The full JSNA Recommendations can be found in Section 10 of the Sexual Abuse JSNA (appendix attached). They are summarised below:

Prevention to reduce levels of sexual abuse in the population through:

- Media campaigns
- Education
- Safeguarding young people at risk.

Improved awareness and identification of sexual abuse by mainstream services:

- Training of staff to identify and support survivors
- Direct Enquiry – asking the question
- Analysis of data
- Workplace Health Programmes and Policies.

Access to Support and Services for Survivors:

- Promote the 24 Hour Domestic and Sexual Abuse Helpline
- Address NHS waiting times for therapy
- Maintain and improve staffing in Sexual Assault Referral Centre
- Meet the needs of female and male survivors.

Criminal Justice Recommendations:

- Continue efforts to improve investigation and prosecution of sexual offences recognising that poor criminal justice outcomes are linked to poor disclosure levels
- Ensure developments are shared with, and understood by other partners – through the Nottinghamshire Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive.

## **Other options considered**

- 18 Previous Nottinghamshire strategic needs assessments have included sexual abuse and violence as a small sub-section of the violent crime needs assessment. In other local authority areas sexual abuse and violence are included with domestic abuse as Violence against Women and Girls.

- 19 The production of a separate sexual abuse needs assessment has provided an opportunity for greater focus on this issue, and has been welcomed by practitioners with responsibility for support services

### **Reasons for recommendation/s**

- 20 These recommendations have already been accepted by the Health and Well Being Board Information Group and the DSA Exec. Since the Community Safety Committee has a unique role to promote the safety of vulnerable people in the community, the support of Members for these recommendations on sexual abuse will provide an important contribution to a successful outcome to this work.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

- 21 This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) It is recommended that Committee:
- note the report
  - support the recommendations of the JSNA which will be taken forward by the Nottinghamshire Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive on behalf of the Safer Nottinghamshire Board and the Nottinghamshire Health and Well-Being Board.

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### **Constitutional Comments (SG 17/10/14)**

12. The proposals in this report fall within the remit of this Community Safety Committee.

### **Financial Comments (KAS 07/10/14)**

- 13 There are no financial implications contained within the report.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Nottinghamshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Sexual Abuse Chapter 2014.

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- 'All'