

1 April 2019**Agenda Item: 6**

DOMESTIC ABUSE SUPPORT SERVICES PROCUREMENT

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Purpose of the Report

1. To describe the rationale, scope, model and funding of a service to support residents of Nottinghamshire who experience Domestic Abuse, enabling them to understand and recognise abuse, safety planning, information, advice and support to take action and improve their overall wellbeing.
2. To seek approval for the service model, funding allocation, re-procurement approach, recommended contract duration, and permission to award the Contract to the Bidder offering the most economical advantageous tender.

Information

Strategic Context

3. Tackling Domestic Abuse is a strategic priority for both the Safer Nottinghamshire Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) [Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2022](#). Domestic Abuse services also contribute to achieving the Nottinghamshire County Council Plan [Your Nottinghamshire, Your Future 2017-2021](#) commitment to make Nottinghamshire a great place to bring up a family, specifically Commitment 1: *Families prosper and achieve their potential* and Commitment 2: *Children are kept safe from harm*.
4. The newly revised and updated [Nottinghamshire Domestic Abuse JSNA 2019](#) sets out the needs of local people. Based on prevalence estimates from the [Crime Survey England & Wales March 2018](#), 20,464 persons (14,360 women and 6,104 men) are thought to have experienced domestic abuse in the previous 12 months in Nottinghamshire. Whilst Domestic Abuse is often under-reported, Police recorded crime in Nottinghamshire rose from 5,808 between July 2016 – June 2017 to 6,645 between July 2017 - June 2018 equating to a 14.4% increase in reporting.

Current Commissioned Services

5. The County Council's commissioned services were accessed by 2391 women, men and children in 2017/18, and 883 over 16s were assessed as being at high risk of harm, leading to a referral to the MARAC (Multi-agency risk assessment conference). The MARAC is a

weekly information-sharing forum attended by a range of agencies, key among whom are the IDVAs (Independent Domestic Abuse Advocates) who provide dedicated support to survivors. The number of referrals to MARAC is estimated to be 10% higher in 2018/19 than in 2017/18.

6. Services are facing increasingly complex and difficult cases but continue to meet and often exceed outcome indicators which measure: improved wellbeing (reduced social isolation, increased confidence, ability to cope), ability to recognise abuse, safety, access to criminal justice, understanding of support options and stronger family relationships. Quality Assurance visits further evidence that the services provided are robust, well received by service users and provide good value for money.
7. Whilst the focus is on people at high risk, services also support people at lower levels of risk. Nottinghamshire services also participate in [Change that Lasts](#), a programme which aims to ensure a more mixed economy of risk and needs based services and approaches.
8. The current contract commenced 1 October 2015 with a duration of 3+1+1 years. Committee approval for Public Health Commissioning Intentions extended current contracts for Domestic Abuse services to March 2020 (contract duration 4½ years). The contract is split into: Community-based Support Services (north and south), the Helpline and support for refuges in Bassetlaw and Mansfield.
9. Domestic Abuse services are funded and jointly commissioned by NCC through Public Health and by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The table below sets out current funding responsibilities.
10. It should be noted that the budget for this service has been reduced slightly over the term of the contract in line with the requirement for NCC to achieve savings and that providers' own fundraising and involvement of volunteers complements our investment to address the needs of survivors.

Funded by	Amount	Service Element
Public Health	£970,259	Community-based support services, Helpline, Refuge
PCC	£ 469,496 TBC	Community-based support services, Helpline
Total	£1,439,755	

The County Council's ambition

11. The County Council's ambition is informed by the constraints of the budget (there is no additional funding) and increasing need. The intention is to sustain the quality of the outcomes which residents of Nottinghamshire benefit from, and achieve this within the current fixed funding envelope.
12. The [Nottinghamshire Domestic Abuse JSNA 2019](#) includes an extensive literature search which has updated the evidence and addressed emerging issues. NICE Guidance was reviewed in 2018 and confirms its recommendations in relation to the range of specialist

services which should be made available. Whilst other aspects of domestic abuse are considered in the JSNA, NCC commissioned services focus on the support needs of victims and survivors.

13. Service commissioning will be split into:

- Community-based support services including support for two refuges
- Helpline

14. The new contract will continue to ensure that service interdependences are fully addressed.

Community-based support Services

15. Service scope and outcomes

- The service will address the needs of survivors: women, men, children and young people, as well as teenagers who may be at risk in their own relationships.
- Service outcomes will measure improved wellbeing (reduced social isolation, increased confidence, ability to cope), ability to recognise abuse, safety, access to criminal and civil justice, understanding of support options and stronger family relationships.

16. What the Service will do

- Ensure sufficient IDVAs (Independent Domestic Abuse Advocates) to support adults at high risk (often where children are involved) going through the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) or whose partners are being prosecuted for offences against them and are going through the court process.
- Administer the MARACs held alternate weeks in the north and in the south of the County
- Provide one-to-one and group work support for survivors at medium and standard risk
- Offer locally-based drop-ins for information, advice and support
- Freedom Programme - domestic abuse awareness programme for women
- Offer dedicated children and young people's workers through one to one support and group work
- Provide a separate male service run along same lines as for women, including referral to MARAC
- Provide joint multi-agency training
- Provide support to two refuges (Bassetlaw and Mansfield)

17. How the Service will deliver

- Noting the gendered nature of Domestic Abuse, the service will provide separate services and venues for women and men
- Noting the need to be responsive to local needs i.e. the service will be place-based and will work with other services to offer this e.g. Children's Centres
- Assessment following referral from other agencies using the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment checklist (DASH), or by self-referral
- Noting the number of children on Child Protection Plans 'with DV' (domestic violence), where appropriate, some services will be co-located with and work closely with Children's Social Care.

Support for Two Refuges

18. There are currently four women's refuges in Nottinghamshire: Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Broxtowe and Newark. These are owned by two Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). The cost to any individual using this accommodation is met through housing related benefits, so is outside the scope of this procurement. In terms of the wider housing context, a report has been commissioned that will map housing with support across the County from ARK consultancy and this will include refuges.
19. Historically, when the tender was procured in 2015, the refuges in Broxtowe and Newark opted to remain independent and source funding via the MHCLG (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government).
20. The current contract funds support for staffing costs to the two refuges in Bassetlaw and Mansfield and the intention is to include this within the Community based support services tender.

Helpline

21. The Nottinghamshire 24 Hour Freephone Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline is currently provided by Women's Aid Integrated Services (WAIS). This service is an important component of the system. The Helpline covers both City and County and WAIS owns the telephone number which is well-known across the County. The Helpline has always relied on the support of a number of funders to meet the cost of delivery. Comparisons with other similar services have shown this Helpline to be cost effective. County survivors and practitioners account for approximately 20% of all usage and the current NCC and PCC contribution is proposed to be maintained at £84,894, approximately 29% of the total cost.
22. Given that the full stand alone cost of a 24 hour helpline would be over £350,000, the County would be unable to fund this independently, therefore Public Health is seeking agreement to explore a partnership agreement from 1 April 2020 with Nottingham City Council to continue the delivery of the Helpline. This would ensure that the contract term is the same for both commissioners and strengthen the contractual arrangements between the three main partners (NCC, Nottingham City and PCC). These changes would also reduce the administration and reporting required from the Provider and allow more of the funding to be allocated to service delivery. Public Health intends to further promote the helpline to increase awareness.

Funding

23. The Service is contained within budget and met from the Public Health Grant and the PCC. The Public Health Grant may change, therefore service developments are within the agreed budget envelope that is affordable for this service. The table in paragraph 10 above sets out current funding responsibilities.

Procurement approach

24. Public Health seeks agreement to retender in 2019/20 in order to deliver new services from 1 April 2020. This will enable Public Health and the PCC to respond to updated guidance, explore the market and ensure value for money.
25. Community-based Support Services – Public Health seeks agreement to commission support services through a competitive tendering approach.
26. Helpline – Public Health seeks agreement to explore entering into a partnership agreement from 1 April 2020 with Nottingham City Council to continue the delivery of the Helpline. Nottinghamshire has access to the Helpline which offers advice and access to support for survivors and professional staff, 24 hours per day, however Nottinghamshire's usage is 20% of total calls and the County's funding contribution would be insufficient to sustain this service alone.

Contract duration

27. It is recommended that the contract length for Community-based Support Services should be up to eight years, comprising an initial contract term of four years with options to extend by up to four years (i.e. 4+2+2).

Next steps and subsequent Committee involvement

28. Subject to approval by Committee, the next steps and key milestones are as follows:

May- June 2019	Develop specification and consult with the market
July 2019	Invitation to tender
September 2019	Submission of bids
September/October 2019	Review bids
December 2019	Award contract
January 2020 – March 2020	3 months mobilisation
1 April 2020	Service commences

Other options considered

29. Other options – delay retendering for 6 months to 30 September 2020 as there is still 6 months of the contract period remaining. Services must be procured by October 2020 at the latest, however this option would not bring the contract in line with the financial year.

Reasons for recommendations

30. The re-procurement is informed by a refreshed Domestic Abuse JSNA which identifies increased need and evaluates the evidence. The timescales meet the requirements of both NCC and the PCC.

Statutory and Policy Implications

31. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Crime and Disorder Implications

32. This report has been written with the support of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Domestic Abuse is a key priority of the Safer Nottinghamshire Board, and the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive, which is a sub-group reporting to the SNB.

Data Protection and Information Governance

33. All data protection and information governance procedures will be followed recognising that there is a sensitivity and vulnerability of the group supported. A Data protection Impact Assessment will be completed for this Service.

Financial Implications

35. The Service is contained within budget and met from the Public Health grant. The Public Health Grant may change, therefore service developments are within the agreed budget envelope that is affordable for this service.

Human Resources Implications

36. No HR implications as this is a commissioned service.

Human Rights Implications

37. No known human rights implications,

Implications in relation to the NHS Constitution

38. No known NHS Constitutional implications.

Public Sector Equality Duty implications

39. An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed on the Service Specification.

Smarter Working Implications

40. No smarter working implications.

Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications

41. All services are developed to reduce risk and safeguard survivors and their children. Specifically Children's Social Care and Adult Social Care are core agencies of the MARAC, and the MARAC works in partnership with the MASH.

Implications for Service Users

42. Services provide evidence based, timely and tailored support for survivors and their children at a time of crisis and ongoing support to survivors to help them rebuild their lives.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

43. No known Sustainability implications

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That Committee approve the service model set out in the report and the retender of the community based support services and award of the contract to the bidder offering the most economically advantageous tender
- 2) That Committee approve the exploration with the City Council of a partnership arrangement for the Helpline service
- 3) That Committee receive an update on the services following contract award

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Constitutional Comments (CEH 28/02/2019)

44. The recommendations fall within the remit of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee under its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (DG 27/02/2019)

45. The financial implications are contained within paragraph 35 of this report and is subject to the continued contribution by the OPCC.

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.

- Commissioning Intentions Paper – February 2018 – Adult Social Care and Health Committee

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All will be affected.