

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY & WASTE CABINET PANEL

FRIDAY 1 JULY 2016 AT 10:00AM

DOMESTIC ABUSE PROGRAMME UPDATE & STRATEGY

Agenda Item No.

7

Report of the Director of Community Protection (Chief Fire Officer)

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Executive Member/s:- Richard Thake, Community Safety

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The report provides an update to the panel on the activity undertaken to bring about a series of multi-agency domestic abuse improvements including the development of a Domestic Abuse (partnership) strategy and a commissioning timetable. The work follows on from the SafeLives (previously CAADA) review published in January 2015.

2. Summary

- 2.1 As part of wide scale improvement activity across partners, a new Domestic Abuse partnership strategy is due for publication in July 2016. The Panel are asked to endorse the strategy, subject to comments received, and receive the update on programme activity.

3. Recommendation/s

- 3.1 It is recommended that;

The draft Domestic Abuse (partnership) strategy is endorsed by the Cabinet Panel, subject to comments received by members

That The Cabinet Panel receive an annual progress report of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Action Plan for oversight

4. Background

- 4.1 The SafeLives (previously CAADA) review into domestic abuse services in Hertfordshire was funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner and published in January 2015. The review found that focused improvements were needed in;
- the governance and leadership arrangements for domestic abuse
 - the consistency through which victims are referred to services, &

- the provision of services and support for victims and perpetrators
- 4.2 The SafeLives overall recommendation was that Hertfordshire should create an effective care pathway for domestic abuse from initial identification to step-down and recovery, so that families living with domestic abuse can be made as safe as possible.
 - 4.3 The SafeLives review found that previous domestic abuse strategies and activities were not necessarily owned or resourced at the right level, and did not comprehensively set out an approach to the commissioning of Domestic Abuse services. The risk of returning to this position has been minimised through the new domestic abuse governance arrangements, the creation of a clear strategic framework, and the establishment of a Senior Commissioning Manager (Domestic Abuse) post in HCC Health and Community Services.
 - 4.4 A significant amount of progress has been made since the review as part of a partnership wide Domestic Abuse Improvement Programme including a new draft Domestic Abuse strategy and the development of a clear commissioning timetable. This report provides an update on activity to date and a copy of the new draft strategy for discussion before publication.

Progress to date

- 4.5 Following the review, a Domestic Abuse (Improvement) Programme was established in order to deliver a series of multi-agency improvements based around the reviews recommendations and findings. The programme is led by an Assistant Director in the HCC Community Protection Directorate with specialist consultancy support provided by SafeLives. A permanent position of Senior Commissioning Manager (Domestic Abuse) was created in the HCC Health and Community Services Directorate to support the significant commissioning activity required, and a temporary (one year) Business Support Officer position has helpfully been filled on a secondment basis by a member of the Safeguarding Children's Business Unit.
- 4.6 The programme has been successful in bringing about significant change in the way that partners work together to tackle domestic abuse, and discussions are now taking place ahead of formal programme closure in order to ensure that improvements are sustained and the benefits fully realised
- 4.7 The Domestic Abuse Programme is being delivered in tandem with three other multi-agency projects, all of which are contributing to making improvements for women, men and children experiencing or using domestic abuse. These are
 - Family Safeguarding Teams
 - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
 - Adults with complex needs pilot
- 4.8 The Domestic Abuse improvement programme is structured around eleven work packages, five of which are cross cutting in their nature.

The top three priority projects are Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs), Commissioning and Domestic Homicide Reviews. The work packages are led by officers from HCC, Herts Constabulary, and Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Community Rehabilitation Company (BeNCH).

Key projects	Cross-cutting themes
Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences	Governance & Leadership
Commissioning	Communications
Domestic Homicide Reviews	Equalities
Perpetrator / Specialist Domestic Violence Courts - effective practice	Performance
Honour Based Abuse	Learning & Development
Children and Young People	

- 4.9 A new governance structure is in place (Appendix 1). A new Domestic Abuse Executive Board was established in June 2015, chaired by the HCC Director of Children's Services, and brings together senior leads across statutory agencies with senior representatives from the Voluntary & Community Sector, Districts and Housing. The previous Domestic Abuse Strategic Programme Board (chaired by Herts constabulary) has been re-shaped into a Partnership (Operational) Board in order to focus on programme priorities. Five sub-groups, some of which are task/finish, have been established and have clear action plans in place.
- 4.10 A new draft Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 'Breaking the cycle' 2016/19 was published for consultation in January and the latest version is included at Appendix 2. Detailed work on developing a strategic action plan is underway.
- 4.11 An improvement programme risk register is in place and monitored by the Executive Board. The key risks for the programme are around funding, partnership working and communications.

SafeLives recommendations - progress update

- 4.12 The table on the following pages outlines progress against SafeLives main recommendations.

Summary of recommendations and main activities to date

1. Bring in joint commissioning of all domestic abuse services countywide, based on an agreed understanding and thresholds of need and risk.

- i. Senior HCC Domestic Abuse Commissioning Manager in post from July 2015
- ii. Commissioning timetable developed and agreed by the Executive Board (Appendix 3). Several stakeholder workshops held across Refuge, IDVA and Perpetrator workstreams. The timetable will be under routine review to ensure stakeholder feedback is consolidated as services are consulted on, redesigned and procured.
- iii. Formal notice given to existing Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service provider (Victim Support) – with new contracts expected to come into place from Autumn 2016. Funding for the expansion of the high risk IDVA service has been underwritten by the Executive Board, with funding from HCC, the Police and Crime Commissioner and Clinical Commissioning Groups.
- iv. Work on developing clear pathways and referral routes for victims and professionals is underway with a stakeholder workshop delivered on 1 February 2016.
- v. Accommodation - Work with Refuge providers is currently taking place in order to redesign future accommodation models for high risk victims within the existing HCC budget. An action plan has been developed.
- vi. A Domestic Abuse Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has been developed and used to inform the draft Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy.
- vii. The “Herts change” perpetrator pilot has been expanded via the existing service provider (Relate) whilst the Perpetrator sub-group work on recommendations for future provision.

2. Set up a champions’ network, where workers in all agencies are trained in domestic abuse awareness and how to refer victims.

There is general support across the partnership for a Champion’s Network that builds on existing infrastructures – e.g. the Domestic Abuse forums, the Domestic Abuse Action Group (chaired by HCC) and existing services such as the Domestic Abuse Helpline, Sunflower website and drop in service. A workshop to develop a model for Hertfordshire was held in February as part of the regular Domestic Abuse Action Group meetings, and proposals were taken to the Domestic Abuse Executive Board in June 2016. A small working group has been established and is in the process of developing a business plan in order to attract charitable funding for the network.

3. Build on the Targeted Advice Service (TAS) approach for addressing risk to children, by including related issues such as parental substance misuse and/or mental health problems and by reviewing risk to both the victim and the child in the round with the aim of providing linked support.

Summary of recommendations and main activities to date

The Hertfordshire Childrens Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) went live in July 2015. Contacts that appear to indicate high risk to children require a response to information requests within 4 hours, medium risk within 24 hours and low risk contacts are passed to the Early Help desk within 72 hours.

4. For victims and families at all levels of risk, make sure that universal services provide information and signposting.

The identification of clear referral routes and pathways for victims and professionals is a critical piece of work currently being taken forward by HCC Health & Community Services in consultation with service providers. An initial mapping exercise is complete and a stakeholder workshop was held on 1 February. There are recognised gaps in services and these now form part of the commissioning timetable and strategy.

The new governance structure provides a forum for developing a Hertfordshire wide approach to signposting. The establishment of a Champion's network will support this by the provision of consistent DA awareness training to frontline workers with lead 'champions' identified in agencies. This will be supported by further development of the Sunflower website, and the delivery of a county wide communication strategy to ensure that messages are consistent and the successful branding of 'Sunflower' services used as widely as possible.

5. For victims and families at medium and high-risk, make sure there are enough IDVAs and specialist caseworkers helping victims and families to be safe. There also needs to be support to recover once the abuse has stopped, with linked support for children.

Since the review, a number of additional IDVA's were put in place (funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner) to support high risk victims. The DA Commissioning Manager has also worked closely with the existing service provider to improve contract monitoring arrangements and to stabilise the service, at the same time as improvements being made to the MARAC referral process. The IDVA service for high risk victims is in the process of re-tender with new contracts coming into place in Autumn 2016. Further expansion to include a medium/ standard risk victim service is planned for April 2017. Work is now required to reconcile the SafeLives recommended IDVA level with improvements made across the programme, such as the impact of other specialist caseworkers and better use of the DASH (Domestic Abuse Stalking & Harassment) risk assessment tool.

The Family Safeguarding project has introduced 22 specialist domestic abuse workers to work with families with children on child protection plans, and the Herts constabulary Safeguarding restructure has also increased capacity to respond more effectively.

6. For victims and families at high-risk, ensure that MARAC is appropriately resourced so it can make high- quality action plans to stop high-risk abuse.

An additional two co-ordinator posts have been filled since the review increasing capacity for the administration of the five MARACs. The Chair of the MARAC steering (or sub) group was elevated to a more senior position and moved to Herts constabulary in

Summary of recommendations and main activities to date

recognition of their lead role and to reflect national models. The membership of the group has been reviewed and is now operating more effectively. MARAC objectives have been agreed, and a clear action plan is in place including the expansion of software to further automate the referral process amongst agencies.

MARAC development days have been held for core members, with more planned, and arrangements for single point quality assured referrals are progressing well. Strategic leads have also been identified in the main agencies. The MARAC information sharing protocol and operating procedures are under review and expected to be refreshed shortly.

7. Make sure that there are enough specialist community and residential domestic abuse services.

The provision of community services is included in the commissioning activity timeline with funding sources to be agreed.

Work on designing the new accommodation model, including Refuge, is underway.

8. The Hertfordshire Partnership should pilot proactive management of serial and repeat perpetrators.

A new perpetrator sub-group has been established and is developing an evidence led, multi-agency approach for domestic abuse perpetrators including prevention, provision of services, management and assessment.

The existing perpetrator pilot (Stevenage) has been expanded and extended into 2016/17 until the work of the perpetrator sub-group is complete, with funding provided by the HCC Community Protection Directorate. The Family Safeguarding Project is receiving referrals for perpetrator group work with programmes up and running across the County.

9. Build capacity for innovation, learning and development, so that Hertfordshire knows what works to stop domestic abuse, and can roll it out.

The establishment of champion's network/alliance will assist in identifying notable practice and provide a forum to help cascade a Herts wide domestic abuse learning and development programme, alongside development of the 'professional' area of the Sunflower website.

Learning and development activity is being taken forward in conjunction with the Safeguarding Learning & Development sub-groups including identification of front line worker training via a multi-agency audit.

The key county wide lessons arising from the work of the Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) sub-group are information sharing, safety planning, risk assessments and probing questions. The sub-group has also identified the following themes for further activity across the partnership;

- Training – for front line staff from all agencies, the third sector and for Individual Management Review (IMR) authors, DHR Review Panel Chairs and overview report

Summary of recommendations and main activities to date

writers.

- Information Sharing – further work to ensure that robust information sharing processes are in place and that front line workers are aware of them. Overall adaption of a positive approach (dare to share).
- Inter-agency working – to ensure that there are consistent messages across the partnership, and mapping of the domestic abuse services available in Hertfordshire is available and kept up to date.

10. Improve governance and leadership for Domestic Abuse across the partnership.

A new governance structure is now in place (Appendix 1). A new draft Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy '*Breaking the cycle*' 2016/19 has been publicly consulted on and is expected to be published in the summer (Appendix 2).

Domestic Abuse Strategy 2016/19 – Breaking the cycle

- 4.13 The new draft Domestic Abuse (partnership) Strategy 2016/19 *Breaking the cycle* (Appendix 1) was developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders and includes a new strategic framework which will help to achieve a common and collective response to the issue. The majority of planned activities have been sourced from the improvement plan, detailed sub-group plans and discussions with various stakeholders including the six Domestic Abuse Forum chairs, and the Voluntary and Community sector.
- 4.14 The strategy was published for consultation between January and March. A number of residents who have experienced domestic abuse were involved in the consultation and various meetings were held with stakeholders including the Voluntary and Community sector. Feedback from the consultation was very positive with over 90 per cent of respondents supporting the vision, aims, strategic framework, and suggested activities. Detailed comments were received in relation to various priorities and actions and these will be reflected in the final version.

Housing

- 4.15 Housing for domestic abuse victims and perpetrators is emerging as a key piece of work and needs to fit in with broader activities designed to support vulnerable residents. Work is under way to develop an action plan around the Hertfordshire core housing offer for those experiencing domestic abuse, and this needs to be aligned with a broader accommodation strategy for issues such as move on accommodation. The work is being led by the Hertfordshire Heads of Housing Group, and both a Districts and Housing representative sit on the Domestic Abuse Executive Board.

- 4.16 The housing related support contracts within Hertfordshire refuge services commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council are due to be re-tendered. The current timetable for procurement is under review as it is recognised that there are a number of complexities and issues that need to be worked through before the re-tender process can commence. A Refuge tender working group has been established and includes representation from the Heads of Housing group.

5. Equalities

- 5.1 Detailed Equality Impact Assessments have been created for each of the various sub-group workstreams, and are in the process of being combined into an overarching EqlA for Domestic Abuse. The strategy contains a clear equality statement on page 12 and individual EqlAs will also continue to be developed as part of the commissioning framework and timetable.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 Discussions regarding funding for Domestic Abuse services have been complex across the partnership and there is still some way to go towards identifying funding for all areas contained in the commissioning timetable. Domestic abuse is no single agencies responsibility, and there is a lack of consistency nationally in funding arrangements. The Executive Board agreed a phased approach to funding discussions and prioritised the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service and services for perpetrators as a first step.

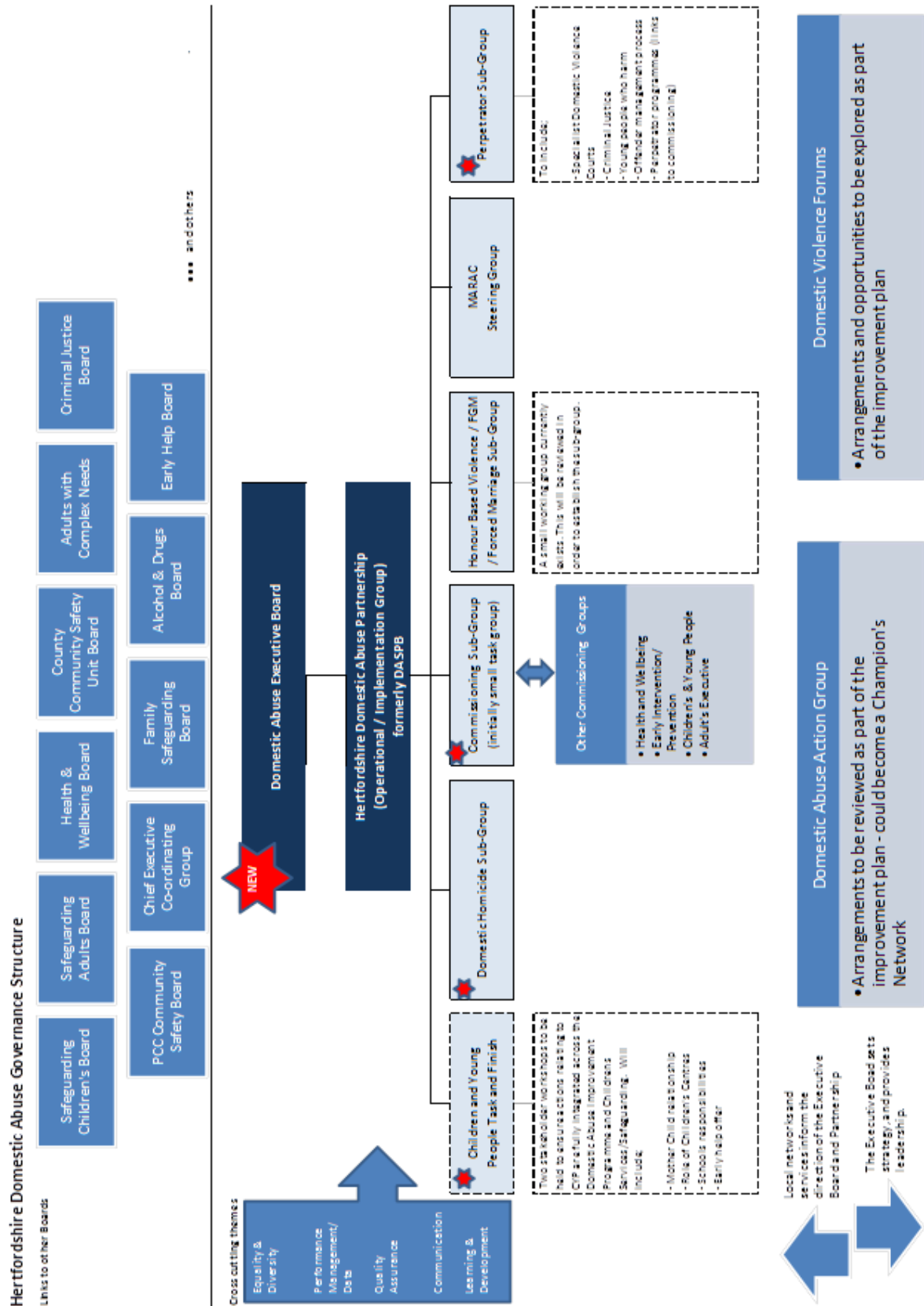
7. Conclusion

- 7.1 Considerable steps have been taken across agencies to implement the main recommendations from the SafeLives review. A clear position statement will be developed as part of the programme closure arrangements and any projects that have not completed will be continued as part of detailed sub-group plans.
- 7.2 The next key milestones for the programme are;
- To publish a final Domestic Abuse (partnership) strategy
 - To complete the re-tender of the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor service
 - To re-model the provision of accommodation for domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, and implement the action plan for housing providers
 - To fully identify clear referral routes and pathways for service users
 - To determine how various elements of the improvement programme should be mainstreamed into existing services and structures such as Safeguarding

- An Eastern Region Peer Review through the Sector Led Improvement Programme is planned for late 2016 and will look at how Hertfordshire is supporting families experiencing domestic abuse. Domestic Abuse is also planned as a specific community safety scrutiny by Hertfordshire County Council during 2017.

7.3 Overall, the momentum created by the improvement programme and the commitment from senior leads and front line practitioners has made a real difference to the arrangements Hertfordshire has in place for managing domestic abuse.

Appendix 1 – Domestic Abuse Governance Structure



Please see separate attachment for full version of the strategy. A copy of the strategic framework is included below.


Strategic overview


Our vision

Women, children and men in Hertfordshire are kept safe from domestic abuse and have opportunities leading to healthy and happy lives.

Strategic Aim		Outcomes
Prevent	<i>Prevent domestic abuse from happening in the first place by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it, and intervening early where possible to prevent it.</i>	Victims, perpetrators and their children are identified early by a wide range of frontline practitioners and partner agencies.
		Communities understand what domestic abuse is, and know how to respond.
		Increased reporting of domestic abuse to police and fewer repeat victims of domestic abuse each year.
Protect	<i>Reduce the risk to victims and ensure that perpetrators are held to account.</i>	Children and young people at risk of harm are identified and referred appropriately.
		Victims are safer and have improved resources to remain safe.
		Victims have increased access to justice.
		Perpetrators of domestic abuse are supported to change their behaviour.
Provide	<i>Work in partnership to provide appropriate levels of support where abuse occurs</i>	Victims receive responsive services and risks of further abuse are mitigated.
		All identified victims are offered an equally accessible service which meets their needs.
		Victims report improved health, wellbeing and resilience.

Appendix 3 - Phased Timeline for Domestic Abuse Commissioning Activity

 Service Area	PHASE 1 –Short term By April 2016	Phase 2 – Medium term 2016/17	Phase 3 – Longer term 2017/18 – 2019/20
IDVA			
IDVA	Existing funding levels unchanged Improve existing contract monitoring and quality assurance arrangements Service delivery Model/outcomes reviewed Agree additional funding 2016 and ongoing from 2017 Tender information Go Live (March 2016)	Autumn 2016 - New service model contract commences with initial increase in staffing levels (phase 1 for high risk visible victims only) Confirm any additional funding for longer term based on needs analysis. Note: to explore longer term funding options with any identified efficiencies through the refuge redesign	April 2017 - Implement full IDVA staffing levels (phase 2 for high and medium risk visible victims)
Accommodation			
Refuges	Improve existing contract monitoring and quality assurance arrangements Vary existing contracts to enhance current offer to include a weekend offer in terms of service access Agree new model for service delivery (to include floating support services). Note: SafeLives specification already developed for Refuge Provision for consideration Confirm funding levels for 2017	January 2016 – pre engagement with providers to start to redesign services for April 2017 Timelines to be reviewed based on stakeholder feedback	April 2017 - New Accommodation Service Model Go Live (phased implementation subject to timeline review)
Community Services			
Perpetrator programmes	Existing perpetrator service continued with additional funds (until January 2016)	Existing perpetrator service continued and expanded Review of perpetrator outcomes and best practice approaches	April 2017 - Implement new service arrangements

 Service Area	PHASE 1 –Short term By April 2016	Phase 2 – Medium term 2016/17	Phase 3 – Longer term 2017/18 – 2019/20
<i>Perpetrators cont...</i>		(via Perpetrator sub group) Agree additional funding for any new service requirements for 2017/18+ based on needs analysis	
<i>Pathways for Support</i>	Review current 'offer for Herts' Agreement for future service delivery model including additional funding requirements	TBA - Implement new service arrangements and/or communications refresh in parallel to IDVA Phase 1 launch (to ensure pathways are clear for different thresholds for support)	
<i>Children's Support</i>	Review current 'offer for Herts' including community based solutions (incl links with Children's and Young People Sub Group) Identify efficiencies and/or additional needs /resources. Note: to explore longer term funding options with any identified efficiencies through the children's safeguarding team	TBA subject to Safeguarding Team review outcomes	
<i>Community Support</i>	Evaluate current service options for victims at home/community based. Identify efficiencies and/or additional needs /resources	TBA subject to review outcomes	April 2017 - Fully reviewed service offer to Go Live (aligned to refuge redesign to ensure offer is complementary)