



## **SOCIAL POLICY - POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT TEAM - 2018 WEST LoTHIAN 16 DAYS OF ACTION CAMPAIGN**

#### **REPORT BY HEAD OF SOCIAL POLICY**

##### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to provide panel members with an overview the West Lothian Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault Team and of the 2018 West Lothian 16 days of action campaign.

##### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the panel notes the contents of the report.

##### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

###### **I Council Values**

- Focusing on our customers' needs
- Being honest, open and accountable
- Making best use of resources
- Working in partnership

###### **II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**

- Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Act 2001
- Abusive behavior and sexual harm (Scotland) 2016
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006
- Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Equality Act 2010 and the (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.
- Domestic Abuse Act (Scotland) 2018

###### **III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**

None

###### **IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators**

Following the 2017 campaign there was an increase in referrals to DASAT and a decrease in police referrals following event (details in main

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|             |   | body of report). We have yet to evaluate this year's figures.   |
| <b>V</b>    | <b>Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>          | We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities<br><br>People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances |
| <b>VI</b>   | <b>Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b> | Within existing resources   |
| <b>VII</b>  | <b>Consideration at PDSP</b>                          | None  |
| <b>VIII</b> | <b>Other consultations</b>                            | CEDAR group attended event and provided feedback and consultation on future planning.   |

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **Background**

West Lothian's Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault Team (DASAT) is a unique, 18-staff public service hosted by West Lothian council and co-located with police, courts, SCRA, social work, housing, health. DASAT serves adults and children who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse, sexual assault, other forms of violence. Workers are cross-trained to provide support for both domestic abuse and sexual violence. DASAT continues to be the site of innovation for integrated VAW support provided as a public service.

West Lothian Domestic and Sexual Assault Team (DASAT) offers a framework of integrated services which respond to both domestic abuse and sexual assault including:

- The Court Advocacy Service  
The Court Advocacy Service works closely with the Procurator Fiscal's Officer to deliver a high quality service for victims of domestic abuse involved in the court process. The service received 801 referrals during 2017-2018. Evaluations from service users informed us that 100% felt safer due to court advocacy intervention.
- Living in Safe Accommodation (LISA)  
The LISA service aims to keep women and children safe in their own homes and provide multiple housing options to support women experiencing domestic abuse.  
  
In 2017/18 the LISA project supported 126 women. In 32% of the cases, the project has supported women to remain in their own homes and prevented them from preventing women from moving into temporary accommodation.
- DASAT children's service  
DASAT children's service provides 1-1 and group work to children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse. In 2017/18 there were 159 referrals to the service with 98% of children reporting that they felt safer as a result of the service.

- West Lothian CEDAR Project

This project is based on the national CEDAR programme principles designed to address the serious childhood adversity created by domestic abuse. CEDAR is delivered on a multi-agency basis by the Domestic and Sexual Assault Team (DASAT) in conjunction with the Children and Young Peoples Team (CYPT) Youth Action Project, West Lothian Women's Aid and Inclusion and Aftercare Team. . There are 46 staff members from across West Lothian Partnerships who are trained to deliver the CEDAR Project.

In 2017-18, West Lothian CEDAR delivered 3 programmes consisting of 6 children's groups supporting 33 children and 3 women's groups supporting 29 women, all reporting significant qualitative outcomes for their families, such as improvements in their child's:

- Relationship with their parents
- Ability to understand and express feelings
- Ability to express anger in a healthy way
- Understanding of family situation
- Self esteem.

### **2018 West Lothian 16 days of action campaign**

The annual 16 Days of Action Against Gender-Based Violence is an international campaign to challenge and eradicate violence against women and girls. It commences on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women culminates on Human Rights Day and also incorporates White ribbon day, World Aid's day and the anniversary of Montreal Massacre.

The aim of the West Lothian 16 Days campaign is to engage with local partners to work together in a multi-agency approach to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls. Gender based violence is not an issue that can be addressed by one agency alone therefore it is imperative that agencies work together on this cross cutting issue.

There were several multi-agency events across the duration of campaign including:

- A heightened response from Police Scotland with 2 specific 'days of action'
- A Q and A event where members of the public could chat live with Police and DASAT around the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme
- Inputs to West Lothian College students and secondary school pupils around healthy relationships and how to access support
- A community based presentation on domestic abuse and the bystander effect by the Violence Reduction Unit
- Rolling out of the Gender Based Violence e-learning module to Social Policy staff
- Primary school competition on gender inequality with over 70 entries
- Multi-agency awareness-raising stalls at Livingston Centre

There were also multiple joint training events including;

- CEDAR training (Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery) for foster carers
- Training around court ordered child contact in the context of domestic abuse
- Sexual violence prevention training for multi-agency staff working with young people
- 'Training for trainers' event for the roll out of frontline domestic abuse training
- Bystander training for public house staff and shop owners

The purpose of the training programme was to raise awareness of gender based violence across the partnerships and community, enhancing skills and knowledge and ultimately improve outcomes for children and families. There was no cost attached to training.

As part of the campaign we also had several information stalls within high footfall areas of Almondvale Centre in order to connect with the public, raise awareness and provide safety resources. The stalls were well attended and co-facilitated by DASAT/WLWA/Police who were able to raise awareness of violence against women; receive feedback from communities; challenge people to identify ways in which they can influence/affect change and improve opportunities for women and children in West Lothian to seek safety and support.

On Friday 23rd December 2018 the Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership held a 'rally', involving approximately 100 people from partner agencies, voluntary organisations and local support groups as a call to action for all agencies and individuals to take action as part of the International quest to eradicate violence against women and girls.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

Domestic abuse remains a prevalent issue within Scotland; the Scottish Government has published statistics on domestic abuse recorded by the police in 2016/17. Figures show that there were 59,541 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland, an increase of 1% from 2016-17; 81% of all incidents of domestic abuse in 2017-18 had a female victim and a male accused. Within West Lothian there were 2205 reported incidents of domestic abuse in 2017-18.

In West Lothian we are committed to ensuring our communities are safe places, offering improved life chances for all and a better quality of life. We know however that domestic abuse is a major issue and that it has a significant impact on the wellbeing and potential of those affected. We are clear therefore that to improve outcomes for people in West Lothian we need to continue to take action to prevent and reduce the impact of domestic abuse on families and their communities.

The 16 days of action is a short term event however the aim is to generate a long lasting impact, raising awareness of the impact of violence against women and girls and putting out a call to action for all agencies and individuals to take action as part of the International quest to eradicate violence against women and girls. It is imperative that as a Council we continue to provide preventative messages to all members of the public as well as providing secondary prevention to those that need it.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

None

Appendices/Attachments: None

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Date of Meeting: 18<sup>th</sup> January 2019