

## **NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **REPORT TO HEALTH, WELLBEING AND PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**01 March 2021**

**Report Title:** Domestic Abuse update

**Submitted by:** Vulnerability Officer, NBC.  
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Senior Commissioning Manager, SCC.

**Portfolios:** Community Safety and Wellbeing

**Ward(s) affected:** All

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

This report seeks to provide a further update to the Scrutiny Committee on demand and available support services for those affected by domestic abuse (DA) in the Borough.

#### **Key Matters for the Scrutiny Committee's consideration;**

The Scrutiny Committee requested that the following be considered in the report –

- How commissioned services will respond to the challenges ahead for local services and if there were to be an increase in demand, as has been previously expected during the pandemic, how partners might collectively respond.
- National increase in the number of Domestic Homicide Reviews.
- Increases of reported Child to Parent violence.
- The link between mental health and domestic abuse.

#### **Recommendation**

That the Scrutiny Committee consider the information presented and raise questions as appropriate.

## **1. Background**

1.1 The definition of domestic abuse 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
- emotional

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim."

This definition, includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

- 1.2 Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background.
- 1.3 Commissioners and strategic leads continue to track the progress of the Domestic Abuse Bill through parliament and its requirements will influence the review and development of both the pan Staffordshire DA Strategy and Action Plan refresh.
- 1.4 Changes to legislation in relation to responsibility for the provision of Safe Accommodation across England and Wales effective from 1/4/21 is being addressed through a recently established DA Safe Accommodation Delivery Working Group, led by the County Council and reporting to the Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Development Board (DACDB).
- 1.5 Details of the centrally and locally commissioned services were provided to the Scrutiny Committee in November 2019 and those arrangements remain in place.
- 1.6 As part of its work programme, the Scrutiny Committee agreed at its November 2019 meeting that it would further review DA demand and services in the Borough in February 2021. This report has been prepared to enable Members to explore issues such as service demand, how demand is met and the impact of centrally and locally commissioned services.
- 1.7 Scrutiny have sought to explore how commissioned services will respond to the challenges ahead for local services and if there were to be an increase in demand, as has been previously expected during the pandemic, how partners might collectively respond.

## **2. Governance**

- 2.1 Governance of the DA agenda continues to be undertaken by the pan Staffordshire Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Development Board (DACDB). Jointly chaired by strategic leads within Staffordshire County and Stoke-on-Trent City Councils, the Board manages and oversees delivery of the pan Staffordshire DA Strategy (2017-2021) through the DA Action Plan (2017-2021).

The DA Action Plan was originally overseen by three DA working groups;

- Preventing Violence and Abuse;
- Provision of Services & Partnership Working;
- Perpetrators.

Two further working groups have more recently been established to support the DA arena;

- Performance Framework working group;
- Safe Accommodation working group.

The Board and Working Groups comprise multi-agency representation which includes District/Borough Authorities.

## **3. Local demand**

- 3.1 A snapshot of demand data in the Borough for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 has been prepared by Staffordshire Police, to accompany this report and is presented at Appendix 1 for information.
- 3.2 During the period, Staffordshire Police have received 2706 new reports of Domestic Abuse in the Borough, 2157 of those were partner/ex-partner incidents and 549 were due to an incident with a family member. There were 533 repeat victims over this period.

- 3.3 In 2020 there were 232 cases heard at the weekly MARAC, (Multi agency domestic abuse conference). The MARAC is where high risk cases are discussed, risk assessed and actions developed to try and reduce these risks. This is compared to in 2019 where 215 cases were discussed, therefore there was a slight increase.
- 3.3 During 2020 Staffordshire Police changed the way they risk assess incidents of domestic abuse. The previous risk assessment, which was called a DIAL, worked on a scoring system to determine risk. The victim was asked a set of questions and the answers given would determine whether the case was low, medium or high risk automatically. The Police now use the DASH (Domestic abuse Stalking and Harassment) model, the victim is still asked a set of questions, however, rather than an automatic score it is now for attending Officers to use their professional judgement to decide if the case is standard, medium or high risk. Some medium and all high risk cases are then presented and heard at MARAC.
- 3.4 Across the 10 Staffordshire (including Stoke-on-Trent) Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs), Newcastle-under-Lyme NPT has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest recorded domestic incidents, behind Stoke-on-Trent North and Stoke-on-Trent South.

#### **4. Local service provision**

##### **4.1 New Era**

- 4.1.1 The pan Staffordshire contract for provision of support for victims of DA is delivered by Victim Support and the services for perpetrators by the Staffordshire Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), the Reducing Re-Offending Partnership. The service operates under the brand of 'New Era' and commenced in October 2018 on a five year contract.

The New Era commissioned service reports for the first 24 months to 30/9/20:

<b>Victims Service Pan Staffs</b>		<b>Perpetrator Service Pan Staffs</b>	
Enquiries and Referrals	10,815	Referrals	709
<b>Victims Newcastle</b>		<b>Perpetrators Newcastle</b>	
Referrals	1202	Referrals	82
New Adult Cases	929	Cases Supported	46
New CYP Cases	127		
Adult Cases Supported	645		
CYP Cases Supported	96		

##### **4.1.2 Funding**

Funding for centrally commissioned DA services across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is provided by the Staffordshire Commissioners Office (SCO), Staffordshire County Council (SCC) and Stoke-on-Trent City Council.

The original joint financial DA investment of £1,930,000 pa including £909,000 provided by the SCO over and above that provided historically by the County and City Councils was uplifted in October 2019. The annual investment in DA services by the three commissioning partners has increased to £2,157,388 pa.

District/Borough authorities have opportunity to secure additional DA services from New Era through local investment of funds, such as the Staffordshire Commissioner's Locality Deal Fund award.

#### 4.1.3 Service Provision Outline

The New Era service provides geographically consistent support for victims, perpetrators, children and young people, businesses and the local community through a tiered support comprising:

- Prevention
- Early Intervention;
- Targeted & Acute Support.

Investing in prevention and early intervention services is well recognised as the one of the most important factors to reduce the generational cycle of abuse, and such investment was always anticipated to increase levels of demand and indeed confidence in reporting of this form of unacceptable behaviour.

#### 4.1.4 New Era Service Offer

##### *Victims*

There is a consistent, comprehensive service offer available from New Era, including 24/7 telephone contact and Webchat (victims service). For both adults and children, the team provides locally based one to one support and a range of group work programmes alongside step down out of service through peer support.

In the community New Era provide the DA in the workplace programme, run legal surgeries, have court based IDVA support, hospital based support and provide specialist DA awareness training to key cohorts including GP's, dentists, hairdressers, community groups and also engage in prevention education.

##### *Perpetrators*

The perpetrator service aims to rehabilitate offenders and change their behaviour operates with consent. It provides locally based 121 support and a range of programmes for both adults and children and again supports the DA in the workplace programme and prevention education in the community.

#### 4.1.5 Contract Management

Oversight and scrutiny of the jointly commissioned contract is provided by the DA Joint Commissioning Working Group (DAJCWG) made up of representatives from each of the three commissioning organisations, on a quarterly basis.

#### 4.1.6 Summary

It is recognised that whilst new services are delivering positive outcomes, improvement opportunities will continue to be identified. Individual agency referral process pathways will continue to be refined to provide workable streamlined solutions for partners and service users alike.

Whilst relationships between the new commissioned providers and previously commissioned service providers are developing positively, the need for continued harmonisation to meet increasing demand is ongoing and Commissioners are working with all parties to ensure services can effectively meet community pressures.

#### 4.1.7 COVID-19 Pandemic

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted both those affected by domestic abuse and DA provider activity, nationally, regionally and locally. In response to the first national lockdown early in Spring 2020, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent responded very positively to identified concerns through the formation of the DA COVID Task, reporting into the Local Resilience Forum Sub Group.

Partners from across the area including all service providers, police, housing, social care, community

safety, health met weekly to examine police recorded DA incidents, demands on service providers in terms of support and safe accommodation, best practice, funding opportunities, and risk in light of the pandemic. This group continued to operate weekly until August, monitoring information and responding accordingly in conjunction with other themed Task Groups.

With the lifting of national lockdowns over the summer period, the DA COVID Task Group ceased forums and recommenced its activities again in September 2020 by meeting fortnightly, again reporting into the LRF Sub-Group. More recently (December / January 2020, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent has started to see an uplift in both enquiries (relating to general DA, child contact arrangement and legal advices) into DA services compared to the same 8 week period last year and referrals for support, both self and stakeholder. Current information (January 2020) shows a reasonably static level of reported incidents and further work is being undertaken by the Task Group in this regard.

Since the Spring 2020, DA support services have significantly adapted their delivery methods to ensure continuity of service and credit should be given to the dedication of their staff during this extremely challenging period.

Services have retained their front door to victims and their families and Perpetrator programmes have been adapted appropriately. Support services for adults and children has reverted to on-line, both in group and 121 settings and where it's both appropriate and safe, face to face engagement with appropriate measures is still being conducted.

## **4.2 Children and Young People's (CYP) Domestic Abuse Service**

4.2.1 After undertaking a local needs assessment in 2019, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council as the lead partner for the Newcastle Partnership commissioned a specialist domestic abuse provider, Glow, to deliver domestic abuse services specifically for CYP to complement the pan Staffordshire New Era service. It is important to note that this is a small and specialist service compared to the baseline New Era service. The main purpose of the service is to offer specialist support to children and young people affected by domestic abuse, either due to them witnessing it within the family home or experiencing it in their own relationships. This is to safeguard the CYP and to help them move on and reduce the chances that they will go on to become victims and perpetrator's in the future.

4.2.2 The original contract commenced in 2019, in April 2020 the Partnerships team were able to extend the Glow contract until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 using the Locality Deal funding that is provided to the Borough by the Commissioners Office.

4.2.3 First Response in Staffordshire report that there are 1000's of children and young people affected by domestic abuse. In Newcastle Families First suggest that over 50% of the referrals received each week are affected and it is the biggest cohort of children at risk in the Borough.

There are also known to be a large number of teenagers in abusive relationships from as young as 12, these young people need the support to prevent them becoming high risk adults and help them understand the principals of healthy relationships. The last domestic homicide review (DHR) in the Borough was a teenage relationship.

4.2.4 To complement the existing service Glow have launched DASIE – Domestic Abuse Support in Education. This is an accreditation for schools and colleges, to sign up they must agree to have an updated Domestic Abuse Policy, hold awareness days and attend regular training. In return they will receive free training and support which will equip staff with the skills, knowledge and confidence to identify children and young people who are experiencing domestic abuse at home or in their own relationships. 20% of school children will be affected by domestic abuse so it is vital teaching and pastoral staff know how to respond.

#### 4.2.5 Contract Management

Oversight and scrutiny of the CYP service in the Borough is provided by the Newcastle Partnership.

During 2020, the Glow CYP team have had to adjust they work to ensure they have carried on delivering the best possible service to CYP. As soon as the pandemic started and schools were closed GLOW contacted all schools in Newcastle to look at new ways to work with CYP, they have stayed in regular contact throughout with teachers and pastoral leads to try and manage risk in partnership.

A text message service was introduced specifically for young people whereby staff were available 10am-10pm every Monday and Thursday called Teen Take Over. All schools were delivered young people's survival cards.

All the Glow team were issued with PPE and since March have continued to deliver support face to face, initially to the most high risk cases and then as schools opened up, all CYP were offered face to face support from September 2020. Throughout the pandemic the staff have showed exemplary commitment to the most vulnerable children and young people in the Borough.

Over the summer months further letter box packs were delivered to all CYP who were being supported to help with coping skills and managing emotions.

As a means of communication a newsletter has been introduced and sent to schools regularly so they knew that the service was still operating and how to refer. The message to schools was to look for the hidden victims of domestic abuse.

As a result of the continued awareness raising that has been carried out by the service provider over the pandemic, they have continued to receive a substantial number of referrals. The total number of referrals to the service from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 was 97. 7 CYP declined support and therefore the total of 90 CYP have been accepted and supported. At the time of writing the current caseload for the Young Persons Violence Advocate (High risk) (part time) is 13 and for the CYP practitioner (standard risk) (full time) is 20.

### 5. New developments

#### 5.1 **Safe Accommodation**

- 5.1.1 The Domestic Abuse Bill is currently working through Parliament and has had its second reading in the House of Lords. Once it has received Royal Assent, statutory guidance will be published and the Safe Accommodation Duty will come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.
- 5.1.2 There are a number of provisions within Bill, including a statutory duty on upper tier local authorities to convene a Local Partnership Board in relation to the delivery of domestic abuse support within safe accommodation. Local authorities can utilise existing partnership Boards, where appropriate.
- 5.1.3 Local Partnership Boards are required to:
  - Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse services;
  - Develop and publish a domestic abuse strategy for the provision of this support, based on the findings of the needs assessment;
  - Give effect to the strategy (by commissioning / decommissioning of services);
  - Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of strategy;
  - Report progress to MHCLG.
- 5.1.4 The DACDB has agreed to act as the Local Partnership Board, for the purposes of fulfilling the duty, and a Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Sub-Group has been established to lead on this work. Newcastle Borough Council are represented at this group.

- 5.1.5 The Safe Accommodation Sub-Group have developed an action plan, which responds to each element of the duty. It outlines the activities required to prepare for the introduction of the duty and subsequent steps needed to implement it.
- 5.1.6 MHCLG funding will be available to upper tier local authorities (i.e. Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council) to support the delivery of the duty. MHCLG have undertaken consultation on the proposed funding allocation formula, but the final allocation has not yet been confirmed.
- 5.1.7 The duty covers a range of types of safe accommodation (including refuge accommodation, specialist safe accommodation, dispersed accommodation, sanctuary schemes, move-on accommodation and other forms of domestic abuse emergency accommodation).
- 5.1.8 Local authorities are not expected to deliver the Duty before it comes into force on 1st April 2021 i.e. they are not expected to have undertaken needs assessments, developed strategies or commissioned services. MHCLG have indicated that they expect that existing arrangements for service provision in areas will be maintained, while this work is undertaken. Staffordshire County Council are working closely with Newcastle Borough Council, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and Stoke City Council to ensure that existing refuge service provision in the north of the county, which is provided by Glow, is maintained.

## **6. Local working arrangements**

- 6.1 Since the last Scrutiny review in 2019, the Daily Hub has continued to evolve and grow, there has been an increase and variation in partner participation and it provides a mechanism to refer cases into the third sector for continued support to de-escalate risk, increase preventative activities and therefore elevate pressure on statutory services, e.g. frequent callers to the Police with non-emergency contacts.
- 6.2 Referrals are currently made to the Daily Hub using 'professional judgement' from partners who may need to ascertain further information following issues relating to vulnerability, which have given a cause for concern or having already identified that a single agency response is not sufficient to resolving the issue or to de-escalate the presenting risks.
- 6.3 The Daily Hub works alongside the Weekly Hub, which manages more complex vulnerability cases, needing longer term attention and the weekly MARAC forum, which manages high risk domestic abuse cases in the Borough. Where a more considered review of vulnerability is required, cases are referred from the Daily forum to the Weekly forum and for high risk domestic abuse cases they are referred directly to the MARAC from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) but with immediate safeguarding and problem solving put in place locally.
- 6.4 The MARAC is convened at Castle House each week and is well attended by a range of participating partners including Police, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, New Era, Children's safeguarding and Early Help Team, Aspire Housing, Glow, Newcastle Housing Advice, Homestart, Mental Health, Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Maternity Services. The forum is Chaired by either the Neighbourhood Commander from the Neighbourhood Policing Team at Staffordshire Police or the Partnerships Manager at the Borough Council, who ensure that appropriate tasking is assigned to partners who contribute to reducing the risk and harm around vulnerable victims of domestic abuse and their families.
- 6.5 Once it is decided that a case is being reviewed by the MARAC, it is referred to New Era's Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) and in line with Victim Support's Policy, they contact the victim if they agree to be referred onto a DA specialist to receive support, in order that their feelings and wishes can be brought to the MARAC and taken into consideration when trying to reduce risk around the victim and their family.
- 6.6 Newcastle was chosen as a pilot site for local MARACs (Multi agency risk assessment conference) in 2018, where high risk cases of domestic abuse are discussed, risk assessed and safety measures

are put in place. This approach has been extremely successful in Newcastle and as such has been mainstreamed and used as an example of good practice for other districts in Staffordshire. The rest of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent have recently gone live with their own local MARACS, meaning that each District will now be responsible for their own MARAC and running of high risk cases. Each District has a MARAC co-ordinator employed by Staffordshire Police to assist the MASH (Multi agency safeguarding hub) on a local level.

## **7. Other local initiatives**

- 7.1 The Borough Council previously led on a large range of domestic abuse awareness campaigns but now supports campaigns run by local providers e.g. New Era and Glow. To increase the awareness due to the pandemic the Council are also sharing key messages on social media from Staffordshire Police and have created a community safety themed Facebook page to share key messages and signpost and encourage victims to get support.
- 7.2 During the pandemic the Council have been encouraging staff to reach out if they are worried they may be suffering from domestic abuse and providing signposting and support as appropriate.
- 7.3 The Borough Council also intends to again pursue White Ribbon accreditation, when resources allow over the next 12 months.
- 7.4 Over the last 12 months there have been a variety of other national funding sources available for domestic abuse projects, predominantly available to the voluntary sector.

## **8. Key matters for consideration**

### **8.1 Domestic Homicide Reviews**

There is no up to date available evidence to confirm that there has been an increase nationally of domestic homicide reviews (DHR's) despite best efforts of Officers from the partners to ascertain this information. The Commissioner's Office have approached the Domestic Abuse Commissioner to consider statistics throughout the pandemic.

The Borough currently has two potential DHR's that have been paused to allow the Police to carry out further investigations. The DHR Review Panel will reconvene when charging decisions have been made, to make a decision as to whether a review is required. The Home Office have been made aware of the position with the two cases.

Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent there are currently three live DHR's, with a further number pending due to outstanding charges and enquiries, which is an increase to previous years. However, it is too early to say if COVID has played a part in those cases because the reviews are in the very early stages and have not concluded.

In an attempt to prevent domestic homicides, partners across Newcastle-under-Lyme, have increased their campaigning on domestic abuse including the Borough Council, Aspire Housing and the Police to name a few. The Council are supporting the campaigns by all the local providers. These campaigns have been stepped up across Staffordshire to try and increase potential victims knowledge that there is support and help still available.

### **8.2 Child to Parent Violence**

In Newcastle there has been an increase of child to parent cases heard at the high risk forum, MARAC. In 2020 there were 16 cases whereas in 2019 there were just 5.

The cases that are heard at MARAC tend to also involve substance misuse and / or issues with alcohol. Whilst this is concerning and cases where the child is the perpetrator often bring extra



complexities as the parent doesn't want to get their child in trouble with the Police, in Newcastle there have been some successes with these cases.

There is successful partnership working in Newcastle, including commissioned drug and alcohol services. By working in partnership partners are able to offer support to both the victim and also to the perpetrator which has resulted in successful outcomes.

It is too early to say if the pandemic has had any impact on these cases, however, locally it is felt that isolation and financial pressures are contributing to the increase use of alcohol/drug use, linked to mental health and nationally there has been a rise in these issues.

### **8.3 Mental health and domestic abuse.**

Mental health can cover such a broad range of issues, including anxiety and depression. Anxiety and depression are often common with victims of domestic abuse given the abuse they are suffering. However, it is evident from the cases discussed at MARAC that anxiety, depression and more serious mental health conditions are becoming more common with both the victim and perpetrator.

The risk of suicide has also been discussed on a larger proportion of cases for both the victim and perpetrator.

It is again too early to have any evidence that the pandemic is the reason for these increases, however, participating partners in the Borough certainly consider this to be a contributory factor.

Victims of domestic abuse are further isolated by issues such as working from home, home schooling and not being allowed to have physical contact with family and friends. There have been added financial pressures due to being furloughed or job loss which has contributed to increased abuse especially when there is already financial control. This is a national issue and not just a local issue.

Due to the excellent partnership working arrangements in Newcastle, including with mental health services, there has been a joined up approach to offering victims support. There are representatives from the health sector including Lymebrook, who attend the Daily Hub and MARAC, offering input, advice and support when required.

Through partnership working with New Era, the Police, Mental Health, substance misuse providers and other available support services, both victims and perpetrators can be offered a comprehensive range of support in Newcastle, including issues such as financial exclusion, employment and skills and family support, all of which can otherwise have a negative impact on mental health.

## **9. National specialist domestic abuse services**

9.1 There are a wide range of national services available to victims of domestic abuse and their families some of the main services include:

- National Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0808 2000 247 24hr  
(Run in partnership with Women's Aid and Refuge)
- ManKind – Helping Men escape domestic abuse – 01823 334244 10am – 4pm
- Broken Rainbow LGBT Domestic abuse helpline – 0300 999 5428 10am-8pm
- Karma Nirvana – Honour based violence helpline – 0800 5999 247
- Childline – 0800 1111
- NSPCC – 0808 800 5000 24 hr helpline.

## **10. Legal and Statutory Implications**

10.1 The Council has statutory duties under the Children Act (1989) and (2004), the Care Act (2014) and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging

functions we have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

- 10.2 The Council also has statutory duties under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004), when a domestic homicide occurs in the Borough, to instigate and lead a domestic homicide review (DHR), as the accountable body for the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). Overall responsibility for establishing a DHR rests with the local CSP as they are ideally placed to initiate a DHR and review panel due to their multi-agency design. CSPs are made up of representatives from the 'responsible authorities' (Police, local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, probation service and health) who work together to protect their local communities from crime and help people feel safer.

## **11. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been developed for this area of work.

## **12. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 12.1 The costs of the pan Staffordshire domestic abuse service are met by Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire and Rescue and Crime, with contributions from Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Staffordshire County Council.
- 12.2 The costs of additional Children and Young People's service are currently met by the Newcastle Partnership using the Locality Deal Fund from the Staffordshire Commissioner and partnership contributions. It is not yet known if there will be an allocation of any further Locality Deal Funding, therefore it is not yet known if the CYP service can be extended beyond March 21.
- 12.3 The Borough Council commits resources from the Partnerships Team to co-ordinate vulnerability activity in the Borough and contribute to safeguarding vulnerable residents.

## **13. Major Risks**

- 13.1 If domestic abuse services are inadequate and/or do not have enough capacity, support to vulnerable victims and their families will be unavailable which would reduce the ability to undertake preventative work and increases the risk of the occurrence of domestic homicides.
- 13.2 The New Era service is currently commissioned for 3 plus 2 years and therefore has 1 plus potentially 2 years remaining. Commitment to provide funding for the initial contractual term is in place with the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office, Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council under a tri-partite legal agreement. Parties will reach agreement on any plans to extend the service, as per the tri-partite agreement timescales at a date to be defined.
- 13.3 New Era provides baseline services for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Commissioners Office have identified the opportunity to secure additionality based on local identified need. There is a risk however, that if the funding is not available to continue the locally commissioned CYP service beyond March 2021, vulnerable children and young people in the Borough could potentially go without the vital support they need.
- 13.4 The pandemic has brought additional risks to those in abusive relationships, there are now extra barriers to victims and their children reporting or receiving support. This is due to increased working from home or time spent in the home and therefore spending more time with the abuser and the lack of opportunity to get help due to increased isolation. We do not yet know the full extent of this issue and how many victims are affected and therefore suffering in silence.
- 13.5 Despite an increase in campaigning to let those suffering know that they can still get support, there may be many victims who may otherwise be deterred from seeking support due to their inability to have safe contact with services, thus increasing the risk of serious injury or domestic homicides in the Borough.

**14. Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

N/A

**15. Key Decision Information**

- 15.1 This report can be considered key in the following ways: -
- It results in the Borough Council committing existing resources for the function to which the decision relates and;
  - To be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral wards in the Borough.

**16. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

N/A

**17. List of Appendices**

- 17.1 Appendix 1 – Statistical snapshot of domestic abuse in Newcastle-under-Lyme (Staffordshire Police).

**18. Background Papers**

N/A