



Metropolitan Police Authority

Domestic Violence Board – 6 February 2007

PROGRESS REPORT TO THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BOARD

Report by Brent Borough on behalf of the Commissioner

Summary

This progress report seeks to address the outstanding issues and actions given to the borough to progress at the meeting of the MPA Domestic Violence Board held on the 19 September 2006. The report details any progress made as well as the planned work to be undertaken by the BOCU to address these outstanding issues. The report also seeks to request further assistance from TP Crime Directorate or the MPA Domestic Violence Board to progress actions where the BOCU feels this is needed.

A. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASES INVOLVING THE DISABLED COMMUNITY

1. All Domestic Violence Incidents reported on the Crime Reporting System (CRIS) on the borough of Brent are assigned to the Community Safety Unit to investigate. These reports carry a “ DV “ flag and follow the Association Of Chief Police Officer’s definition of domestic violence. However there is a local policy that the CSU will investigate allegations of Domestic Violence within an intimate relationship if either of the two parties are between 16 and 18. (ACPO’s definition relates to both parties being 18 or over)
2. Brent uses a local flag “ disabled “ on the CRIS System. This means that it can be searched for all domestic violence incidents where the victim is disabled. By then looking at the page within the system that stores the victim’s details and in the field “ Viw disability description” the nature of that disability can be ascertained.
3. Since 1 April 2005 there have been 64 Crime reports recorded which have the victim recorded as disabled. Of these 5 have a “DV” flag indicating they are domestic violence incidents.
4. Brent has a Domestic Violence Advocacy Project. It is co located in Kilburn Police Station with the CSU. The project provides crisis intervention for victims of domestic violence (refuge placement is one example) as well as referring them to other appropriate statutory and non-statutory agencies that can provide support and assistance for their particular set of circumstances.

5. Brent have a Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). It is a multi agency meeting which occurs fortnightly where high risk cases involving victims of domestic violence are brought to the meeting and an intervention strategy decided and implemented to prevent repeat victimisation. Representatives from the Physical Disabilities Team and the Mental Health Team currently sit on MARAC.

6. The Community Safety Unit at Brent also investigate all crime reports that come under the Protection Of Vulnerable Adults protocols. Vulnerable adults are over 18 but do include the disabled if their disability puts them at risk of exploitation or abuse. The provisions mainly relate to an offender who acts as a carer (including professional carer) to the victim however there are instances where this would fall within the definition of domestic violence as well. These cases are dealt with in a multi agency forum with Police leading if there is a criminal allegation.

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7. Brent is raising the awareness of the “disabled” flag through training and communicating specifically with core response team officers (who report the offences) and the Crime Management Unit (who do initial supervision) to ensure an accurate as possible picture of domestic violence involving disabled victims is achieved.

8. At present Brent does not have refuge spaces which are suitable for those with physical disabilities. Therefore we would like to be able to offer this service. The difficulty may be that arguably this service would not benefit Brent residents, as they would not be able to access these in borough places.

9. Further partnership work through the Brent Domestic Violence Forum with identified voluntary and community sector organisations such as Elders Voice, MENCAP, Action on Elder Abuse.

10. Within the CSU at Brent we are raising awareness of the use of Intermediaries in dealing with certain disabled victims and increasing the numbers of Officers who are trained under the Achieving Best Evidence Guidelines.

11. In addition to inclusion on MARAC Brent are seeking to include representatives of the disabled community in a soon to be launched borough wide Independent Advisory Group.

12. A Specialist Domestic Violence Court is being launched in Brent on the 14 February 2007. This will have a positive impact on the prosecution of offenders whose victims are disabled as - well as all domestic violence offenders.

Equality and Diversity Implications

It is believed that the measures set out above will have a positive affect on the disabled community. By following them it will highlight the issue of domestic violence committed against the disabled. They will increase: the level of support and assistance received, the prosecution of offenders and the level of identification of victims.

Financial Implications

It is suggested that the initiatives delivered in partnership with local agencies would require some element of resourcing. However the police led initiatives would be mainstreamed through core delivery.

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