



Metropolitan Police Authority

Domestic Violence Board – 4 November 2008

Bromley Borough Response to Domestic Violence

This report has been compiled at the request of the MPA Domestic Violence Board to give information on how Bromley BOCU, in partnership with others responds to domestic violence.

The report will describe how the BOCU works to

- Tackle domestic violence
- Keep survivors safe
- Hold offenders to account
- Prevent domestic violence
- Work in partnership with organisations and communities to improve the response to domestic violence

Good practice and innovation is included as are the challenges that the Borough faces in providing an effective response to domestic violence.

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Introduction

1. Bromley is the largest borough in London. Located in the south east of the capital, it includes Beckenham, Orpington, West Wickham, Crystal Palace, Cray Valley, Penge, Anerley and Biggin Hill. The borough covers an area of over 58 square miles, is divided into twenty-two wards and those wards cover a diverse range of social and policing environments.

2. We share a border with six other London boroughs (Croydon, Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Greenwich and Bexley) plus two County forces (Kent and Surrey). The north of the borough is similar in its make up to some inner London boroughs, whilst the south of Bromley has less dense housing and large areas given over to farmland. The borough contains 77 Primary, Junior and Infant schools and 25 State and Independent secondary schools, all of which contribute significantly to the non-resident population of the borough, with the daily influx of pupils from outside the borough during term-time.

3. There are 26 rail stations in Bromley, the most of any borough in London, many of which feed the commuter population that work, shop and seek entertainment here. Bromley borough also has one of the highest car ownership levels in London, with a consequent high incidence of off-street parking. Many residents commute by train to London, but the majority of shorter journeys are made by car – particularly for those working locally, shopping, leisure and taking children to school.

4. This trend has been boosted by increasing centralisation of facilities and the growth of out-of-town retailing, with the resultant congestion at peak periods. Bromley has a thriving daytime economy, centred around the High Street and the Glades shopping centre, the latter containing 134 retail outlets that attracted over 20 million shoppers a year.

5. The High street is also the focus of the boroughs' night time economy, into which upto 7,000 people can be attracted each night by the more than 50 licensed premises within walking distance of each other. Beckenham, Penge, West Wickham, Chislehurst, Biggin Hill and Orpington also have significant high street areas with the associated retail theft, disorder and public safety issues they naturally attract.

6. Other business centres on the borough include over 40 hectares of large retail units in St Mary Cray and the light industrial units adjoining Biggin Hill Airport, a civil airport with two runways and covering 321 hectares catering for up to 125,000 movements of small commuter and freight aircraft per year.

7. The 2004 mid-year Census estimated that Bromley has a population of 299,122, the fourth largest of London's 32 boroughs. Bromley is divided into 22 wards that vary widely in population density, relative prosperity and concentrations of minority ethnic groups. The average ward population is almost 13,500 with 17 out of the 22 wards over this threshold. The most populous ward, Penge and Cator, has over 16,500 residents, and contains an area that ranks in the top 5% of places of socio-economic deprivation in England and Wales. Compare that with Keston and Farnborough wards, where private residences can cost in excess of £2 million and clear economic and social division can be found here.

8. The breakdown of ethnic groups is 91.6% White, 2.9% Black, 2.5% Asian, 1.9% Mixed ethnic background and 1.1% Chinese. The majority of Black residents live in the northern part of the borough, close to the borders with Lewisham, Lambeth, Croydon and Southwark, whilst a significant Irish Traveller population of long standing resides in and around St Mary Cray. Both these minority populations have representation on the Bromley Independent Advisory Group.

Executive Summary

9. Bromley Borough has been consistently successful in tackling domestic violence (DV) over a number of years when measured by sanctioned detections, arrest rates and successful prosecutions. Although the main aim of this report is to identify police performance in relation to DV and compliance with MPS Policy, the success of the Borough's performance is due to the combined efforts of all our partners.

10. The importance of tackling Domestic Violence has been recognised by the Local Strategic Partnership, which has included DV work within its Local Area Agreement (LAA). A series of stretch targets have been included in the 08-11 LAA with a significant reward element attached.

11. Bromley is committed to dealing robustly with perpetrators and at the same time meeting the needs of survivors and their children. In order to do this we aim to open up and encourage access to a wide range of appropriate local services.

12. The main services provided by the partnership are:

Bromley Domestic Violence One-Stop Shop

13. This is open twice-weekly providing support, advice and information to anyone suffering domestic abuse. It is staffed by representatives from local solicitors, The Police, Women's Aid, Victim Support, Homeless Persons Unit (HPU), and the Domestic Violence Coordinator.

Bromley Advocacy Service

14. This service employs two full time advocates. The advocates provide support for victims through the legal process when the perpetrator has been charged with a crime. Work includes assistance with health, housing, family law and education matters related to living in an abusive relationship often for a long period of time. They provide the same level of support for high-risk victims pre-charge.

Bromley Women's Aid

15. They provide safe, secure, high quality temporary accommodation and support services across the borough to women, and their children, escaping domestic violence and abuse.

Bromley Sanctuary Scheme

16. The scheme provides free home security to those who feel unsafe in their homes due to attack and threats from former partners. This service enables clients to remain safely in their home with their children. Most of the work is contracted to The Safer Bromley Van.

The Safer Bromley Van

17. This is a Safer Bromley Partnership initiative, managed by Victim Support Scheme Bromley providing home security to victims of crime and vulnerable people in Bromley. The van also undertakes contracts from the Bromley Sanctuary Scheme.

Bromley Freedom Programme

18. This is a 12-week programme designed to support survivors and to help them identify characteristics of a healthy relationship and to look forward to a life without violence. The courses are run at locations in Penge, Mottingham and Orpington. Crèche facilities are provided. Bromley is the only London borough running such an initiative.

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

19. The MARAC is a multi agency forum at which high-risk victims of DV are discussed and decisions are made as to how each agency can support that person and their family. Most departments and agencies in the borough support and participate in this initiative. Bromley Police coordinate the MARAC and monthly meetings are held at Bromley Police Station.

Victim Support Bromley

20. Victim Support Bromley is a voluntary organisation offering practical help and emotional support to victims of crime. Daily referrals are received from the

Metropolitan Police, other agencies and directly from victims of crime. Volunteers with specialist training provide specific support for victims of serious crime including domestic abuse.

21. Combining these services with a criminal justice process that works together to robustly deal with perpetrators from arrest to conviction ensures that the maximum support is provided to survivors and their families. This gives them the opportunity to rebuild their lives.

22. We accept however that there is always room for improvement and we have identified in the report areas that we are looking to address. The most exciting opportunity is the impending introduction of 'head cams' that should further improve evidence capture and support the prosecution process.

A. Domestic Violence Data provided by the MPS

23. In the last financial year 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008 there were 3098 incidents flagged as DV incidents in Bromley Borough and of these, 1192 resulted in an arrest.

24. There were 1780 crimes flagged as DV over the twelve months April 2007 to March 2008.

25. Ten percent of incidents of domestic violence represented repeat victimisation within the same financial year as the previous offence.

26. 1056 DV crimes resulted in an arrest.

27. The sanction detection rate was 42 percent, which accounts for 743 detections from 1780 offences.

28. Of the 743 sanction detections, approximately fifty percent were cautions and this represents 371 cautions.

29. No DV incidents were flagged as honour-based violence or forced marriage in Bromley Borough in the last financial year

30. There was one DV homicide in the financial year April 2007 to March 2008

Victim Data

31. Of the 1780 victims of DV in the year 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008 their age ranges were as follows:

- 29% of victims were aged between 30 and 39 years
- 28% of victims were aged between 20 and 29 years
- 23% of victims were aged between 40 and 49 years
- 8% of victims were aged between 50 and 59 years
- 8% of victims were aged between 10 and 19 years
- 3% of victims were aged between 60 and 69 years
- 1% of victims were aged between 70 and 79 years

32. Their ethnicity was as follows:

- 55% of victims self-defined as White British
- 3% of victims self-defined as White Any Other White Background
- 2% of victims self-defined as Black African
- 2% victims self-defined as Black Caribbean
- 2% of victims self-defined as Black Any Other Black Background
- 1% of victims self-defined as Asian Any Other Background
- 1% of victims self-defined as Mixed White and Black Caribbean
- 1% of victims self-defined as White Irish
- 30% of victims did not have their self-defined ethnicity recorded on the crime reporting system

(The total does not add up to one hundred percent because of rounding to the nearest whole number)

33. Their gender was as follows:

- 80% of victims were female
- 20% of victims were male

34. Disability was recorded as follows:

- 18% "mobility"
- 12% "psychiatric or mental disorder" category
- 9% "serious illness"
- 9% "hearing"
- 6% "psychological"
- 6% "learning & understanding"
- 3% "physical co-ordination"
- 3% "disfigurement"
- 33% were recorded as "other disability" and fell outside the remaining disability categories

35. Only three records documented religion

- Two of the victims had Roman Catholicism shown as their religion
- One of the victims had Islam shown as their religion

36. The victim profile with the highest volume was female White European aged between 20 and 49 years, which accounted for 53% of all 1780 victims.

Accused Data

37. In the year 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008 there were a total of 743 people charged or cautioned with offences relating to DV.

38. Their ages ranged as follows:

- 32% of those charged/cautioned were aged between 31 and 40 years
- 28% of those charged/cautioned were aged between 21 and 30 years
- 20% of those charged/cautioned were aged between 41 and 50 years
- 11% of those charged/cautioned were aged between 11 and 20 years
- 6% of those charged/cautioned were aged between 51 and 60 years
- 1% of those charged/cautioned were aged between 61 and 70 years
- 1% of those charged/cautioned were aged between 71 and 80 years

39. Their self-defined ethnicity was recorded as follows:

- 57% charged/cautioned self-defined as White British
- 5% charged or cautioned self-defined as White-Any Other White Background
- 4% charged/cautioned self-defined as Black Caribbean
- 3% charged/cautioned self-defined as Black Any Other Black Background
- 2% charged/cautioned self-defined as Black African
- 2% charged/cautioned self-defined as Mixed White and Black Caribbean
- 1% charged/cautioned self-defined as Asian Any Other Asian Background
- 1% charged/cautioned self-defined as Mixed Any Other Mixed Background
- 1% charged/cautioned self-defined as White Irish
- 24% charged/cautioned did not have their self-classified ethnicity recorded

40. Their gender was recorded as follows:

- 87% charged/cautioned were male
- 13% charged/cautioned were female.

41. Disability of offenders charged or cautioned was as follows:

- Three offenders were shown as having a Psychiatric or Mental Disorder
- One offender was shown as having a serious illness
- One offender was shown as having a learning and understanding disability

42. Religion/belief was not routinely recorded on accused data.

43. In the period 1 April 2008 to 30 September 2008, there were 425 charges/cautions for offences related to DV.

44. In relation to offences brought to justice. For the year 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008 there were 25 people charged with offences of grievous bodily harm (GBH) and above. In the current year 1 April 2008 to 30 September 2008 47 offences of GBH and above that have been charged. In the same periods there were 6 and 12 cautions respectively.

45. The increase in numbers for the current year is connected to the way in which levels of injury are classified.

46. There was one murder review on Bromley BOCU during the current year relating to the homicide mentioned above. DV had not been identified by or to any statutory or non-statutory agencies. Therefore there were no recommendations forthcoming for the MPS or any other agency.

Limitations

47. Religion, belief and sexual orientations are hard to quantify because of limitations with either the data or the corporate indices.

48. Religion is not routinely recorded on crime reports.

49. Belief is not routinely recorded on crime reports.

50. Sexual orientation is not routinely recorded on crime reports.

51. Corporate indices show identification codes for suspects and victims that match the Phoenix code descriptors and self defined ethnicity where the victim or suspect was asked and provided their self-defined ethnicity.

Provenance

52. The Directorate of Resources provided the data for the number of incidents flagged as DV and the number of those incidents that resulted in an arrest as well as the number of DV crimes resulting in an arrest.

53. The Performance Information Bureau Crime and Core Section provided the data for the number of crimes flagged as DV, the sanction detection rate and the proportion of sanction detections, which were cautions.

54. The Performance Information Bureau Crime and Core Section also provided the data for the number of DV homicides. PC Black, Detections Team at PY, provided data on charges and cautions and in relation to offences of GBH as above.

B. Tackling Domestic Violence

55. The Local Strategic Partnership has included DV work within its Local Area Agreement (LAA). A series of stretch targets have been included in the 08-11 LAA with a significant reward element attached.

56. The Safer Bromley Partnership has made DV a priority. The Borough has a well supported DV Forum that brings together the various strands of the Borough DV Strategy and the partner agencies. (Those involved are listed under partnership). The Borough Strategy is owned jointly by the Head of Community Safety and Borough Commander.

Policy Compliance, Implementation and Quality Assurance.

57. All DV incidents notified to Police via the phone are classified by a type 29 flag on the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. Each of these calls should then have a resulting crime number added when the call has been dealt with. Average conversion of T29 CADs to crime reports (CRIS) currently stands at 87% for Bromley Borough against an MPS average of 85%. This data has been provided by MPS PIB data awaited for whole MPS. There can be explanations for this and in order to monitor compliance and improve performance we do the following;

58. An Integrated Borough Operations Office (IBO) meeting chaired by the C/I Ops is held every morning. This meeting reviews all the T29 calls and the results. This meeting also takes place at the weekend and is chaired by the Duty Officer with the result being phoned through to the On-Call SMT.

59. Once the crime is recorded on the CRIS system it is flagged with a DV flag, this enables it to be picked up by the investigators in the Community Safety Unit (CSU). The Crime Management Unit (CMU) plays a key role in checking crimes to ensure compliance with the flagging system. Further safeguards to ensure the CRIS reports are correctly flagged are captured by the BOCU detections team, who search to identify DV CRIS reports by viewing the relationship shown between the victim and suspect.

60. All DV CRIS reports are assigned by the CMU to the Detective Inspector (DI) in charge of the CSU. The DI will view all CRIS reports to ensure that the initial investigation is robust and that there has been due regard to completion of Book124d, risk assessment, safety planning and steps taken to arrest the suspect. Attempts to arrest the suspect who is not present on arrival of Police or other

arrangement to secure the arrest are documented within the details of investigation. Non-compliance of laid down procedure in relation to positive action is dealt with through the Borough Daily Management Meeting (DMM). All remedial steps to arrest suspects are taken by the CSU to ensure there is no delay.

61. CSU Detective Sergeants (DS) set investigation plans in accordance with the DV SOP's. These arrangements have been the subject of favourable comment during recent Territorial Policing (TP) Violent Crime Directorate (VCD) and Assistant Commissioners inspections and review. During office hours front line officers contact the CSU to obtain advice in regard to DV. Outside of these hours advice is available from the main CID office or Night Duty CID as appropriate.

62. For DV incidents where children are a part of the relationship whether present or not a report is created on the Merlin system to bring the situation to the attention of the Social Services, Child Protection Team, Education Services or Primary Care Trust as appropriate. The BOCU has a Public Protection Desk (PPD) with arrangement to share information with the agencies above. Those supervising front-line staff, CMU and CSU supervisors and the PPD monitor compliance in regard to this.

63. As per MPS policy the BOCU uses the book 124d to assist initial investigators capture key evidence/information. Once completed and supervised the 124d is passed to the CSU where the risk assessment is reviewed and an entry is placed on the CRIS reflecting this. The Book 124d is given a sequential log number to ensure that each investigation has a 124d and that there is full compliance with the requirement. As part of the secondary investigation CSU officers are tasked to carry out the full MPS secondary risk assessment model where 'medium' or 'high risk' has been assigned. The unit DI oversees any investigation that involves a victim that is high risk. These are also brought to the DMM to ensure that all possible action is taken to remove/reduce the risk. Victims that remain at high risk are referred to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

64. Memo's on CRIS reports, e-mail to officers and their line managers, briefings with front line officers and training days have assisted in raising awareness in regard to risk assessment and action required to reduce, avoid, remove, or on occasion 'accept' the risk (RARA as per risk management model - Book 124d)

65. DV CRIS reports where there is no crime alleged are allocated for secondary risk assessment, historic research of the parties involved and the venue dating back five years. Advice is given to victims regarding Non Molestation Orders, crime prevention and referral to the 'Bromley One Stop Shop' (see section E).

66. The Borough has two full time Domestic Abuse Advocates (DAA's) employed by Victim Support Bromley but working jointly to the CSU DI. They have dealt with in

excess of 500 cases since January 2007. Their role has been to support victims between charge and the court hearing. Their employment has seen a marked improvement in the number of successful DV prosecutions (63% against a target of 35% contained within the LAA). Should a victim wish to withdraw their support for the prosecution then the CSU DI takes a post charge withdrawal statement. A DAA also assists in the process to support the victim to review options around proceeding with the case and maintain support for the prosecution. Advice is given in regard to personal safety, the powers of the courts in regard to sentencing and availability of local support services (see section C). Further assessment of risk is undertaken and observation made to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) in regard to issue of witness summons or possibility of victimless prosecution.

67. The ongoing supervision of crimes is considered vitally important and is an area that can be improved upon, in order to do that the Borough have invested in a third DS within the CSU, this has already vastly improved the 7 day supervision measure (380 in August, 13 in September). Investigating officers ensure wherever possible contact is made with victims within 24 hours of the crime being allocated. This then allows for secondary risk assessment, and safety planning. Arrest of the suspect is prioritised accordingly and the CSU then utilise Response Officers via the IBO and Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) Officers to assist with arrest enquiries. Other arrests are made by appointment or through circulation on PNC.

68. Irrespective of risk to the victim, where the suspect has been not been arrested, and more than 28 days have lapsed, the investigation is supervised by the unit DI to ensure that all necessary action is being taken. Weekly CSU performance data obtained from Territorial Policing is publicised to the CSU officers and performance discussed at CSU office meetings.

69. Where there is clear sexual motive then investigation primacy will pass to the Sapphire Unit, these crimes are however monitored closely by the DI's and DCI in order to ensure the skills of the CSU are fully utilised, including due diligence around secondary risk assessment.

70. The Borough suffered one DV murder in the last policing year 2007/8. There had been no previous CSU contact with the victim. As a result of a review carried out by the Territorial Policing Critical Incident Advisory Team no DV indicators were established within local statutory and non-statutory agencies. The Police were also fully engaged with a Safeguarding review of the case, as there was a child involved.

Resources

71. The Borough is committed to a fully staffed CSU, investigator numbers were increased from 9 to 12 in late 2006 to reflect an increase in volume and as previously mentioned a third supervisor has recently been added to the unit. The CSU is staffed by, One Detective Inspector (who is the DV Champion for the MPS at Bromley), Three Detective Sergeants and 12.6 Investigators (3DC's, 5 TDCs, 4.6 PCs). In addition an officer fulfils the role of co-ordinator for the monthly MARAC meeting. The unit also has a full time Administrative Officer dealing with storage of 124d and advice letters to victims. The borough supplements the unit with officers on restricted duties when able and the unit currently has two such officers. Gender is split equally at 50% male/female. There are no officers from the LGBT community working in the CSU. Two CSU officers are LGBT representatives providing liaison with the BOCU's eight LGBT liaison Officers. Currently there are no officers employed in the CSU from visible ethnic minority groups. One officer of African origin has recently been posted to the Main CID office from the CSU. Officers are expected to serve a minimum of a year in the unit. The role is a demanding one, which creates a perception among non-CSU officers that work involves high volume in a field of operation that carries most risk.

72. The high volume of work per officer is recognised in recent inspection reports at TP and Assistant Commissioner levels, however the recent addition of a third DS is assisting the management of workload. Each officer currently takes on approx. 4 new cases per week. The CSU provides one member of staff, twice weekly, to attend the Bromley One Stop Shop to offer first hand advice to DV victims.

73. All CSU officers during their attachment will receive the one-week CSU course presented at the Crime Academy. Courses are allocated at the start of the year and the BOCU have been allocated fifteen courses throughout the year. Additional courses are available in regard to 'Achieving Best Evidence' related specifically to CSU officers.

74. Frontline officers attending scenes of DV have the ability to capture evidence by the use of 'Iceflow' cameras. There is a 'Scenes of Crime Officer' (SOCO) available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition officers have the ability to utilise early evidence kits carried on Police Vehicles to obtain swabs and samples, where appropriate. At the end of October 2008 options open to officers to deal with initial scenes of crime will be further enhanced when the BOCU trials 'body worn' video camera's (see section I).

75. The Daily Management Meeting allows the SMT to intrusively fulfil their responsibility in regard to performance management for DV. In addition weekly performance reports from TP and the monthly BOCU performance report produced by the local MIU are circulated to ensure that managers are aware of their teams performance. Performance is also reviewed at SMT meetings and quarterly Inspectors meetings. Posters depicting current performance against performance targets are displayed within the police station and posted to the front of the BOCU daily briefings. Team performance is linked into the PDR process.

76. Bromley has 22 Safer Neighbourhood Teams. SNT's check CRIS entries recorded in their wards by use of the local ID code. Common practice for Ward Sergeants and Constables is to record on the details of investigation that the allegation/incident has been noted by the SNT. SNT's are then utilised to address welfare issues of victims by visiting addresses in instances where there has been no contact with victims as a result of messages left.

77. TP Violent Crime Directorate CSU Service Delivery Team assist the CSU with the provision performance data, oversight of offences involving serious violence, inspection for the purpose of compliance with the MPS SOP on DV and monitoring of staff numbers against volume of crime. In addition to this, advice in relation to potential honour based violence has been obtained from the VCD. The CSU DI attends the bi-monthly CSU DI meetings at New Scotland Yard to spread good practice and to examine current performance.

C. Keeping Survivors Safe and Holding Perpetrators accountable

78. As well as aiming to keep survivors safe through arrangements already described above there are a number of measures available for victims within the BOCU. Provision of panic alarms and the addition, of 'Special Schemes' on CAD where appropriate, these ensure that any calls to the victim's address are treated as urgent. There is a close liaison with Victim Support Scheme Bromley. They attend the One Stop Shop and work closely with the CSU officers and LBB DV Coordinator. This allows for the provision of the 'Safer Bromley Van' and 'Sanctuary scheme (see section D).

79. VSS provide additional victim contact and safety planning advice for those victims who are not high risk and have been previously advised by CSU. There is also a very close relationship with Women's Aid who are the providers of safe refuge within the LBB. The CSU has recently acquired mobile phones that can be provided to victims who have had their phone removed by theft or criminal damage. This

allows for contact by the CSU and the 999 facilities if the victim needs to contact police in an emergency.

80. Detection rates for year 2007/8 were achieved and performance for the current year to date is again on target to deliver MPS and local objectives in relation to detection.

Marac

81. In November 2007 the BOCU commenced a series of steering group meetings with partner agencies in order to implement a Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference. (MARAC). The first MARAC was held in March 2008. Meetings are held monthly with a Steering Group being held quarterly to oversee the process. The existence of a full time MARAC coordinator has allowed for a smooth introduction of the monthly meeting and the intervening processes to manage actions arising from the meeting process. Regularly in attendance at the meeting are representatives from the following statutory and non-statutory agencies: - MPS, DAA's, VSS, LBB DV Coordinator, representatives from the three largest housing associations in the LBB, Women's Aid, LBB Social Services for children and vulnerable adults, Primary Care Trust, LBB Education Services, Mental Health Authority, Probation Service, Crown Prosecution Service and LBB Housing.

82. LBB is not a centrally funded borough. The Safer Bromley Partnership obtained funding through the 'Private Space Violence' initiative of Government Office for London (GOL) to provide training to those in attendance at MARAC and members of the Steering Group. The training was provided by Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA), a charitable organisation, who are sponsored by the Home Office to introduce MARAC, DAA's and Specialist DV Courts across funded areas in England and Wales. This training took place during September 2008, with reviews to take place of subsequent MARAC meetings. Without the funding this training and review of our MARAC process would not have been possible.

83. At present there have been 33 survivors of DV that have been selected as being at high risk who have been given multi-agency service in order to reduce the likelihood of re-victimisation. Data held locally shows approximately 80% of high risk victims put through the MARAC process have remained free of repeat victimisation. Data supplied by CAADA shows 74% of victims remaining free from repeat victimisation as average taken from MARAC's across England and Wales.

Criminal Justice Process

84. The Criminal Justice process plays a key part in keeping victim's safe and bringing offenders to justice and, ultimately, improving confidence in the Criminal Justice System (CJS). Supported by the London Criminal Justice Board, the local Borough Criminal Justice Group brings together all local partner agencies within the CJS to ensure that cases are processed, managed and expeditiously dealt with. All key partners are held to account for performance, for example in relation to case progression, listing of cases, completion of probation reports.

85. There is a good working relationship with the CPS Branch Crown Prosecutor (BCP) who has an appointed lead lawyer for DV issues within the local CPS Office. The Bromley CPS charging centre is situated next to the CSU DI's Office, allowing for close contact and support of CSU officers presenting cases to the CPS. As would be expected, the CPS locally place high importance on DV in line the CPS policy. Victim safety is given relevant attention in administration of the lower threshold test.

86. In order to deliver a more customer focused service, the BOCU has a dedicated Witness Care Unit (WCU), Supported by the MPS lead for Criminal Justice issues, Operation Emerald, the WCU apply the Code of Practice for Victims and Witnesses and the 'No Witness, No Justice' principle, ensuring needs assessments are completed, support provided by a single of point of contact and information is supplied expeditiously in relation to the prosecution processes and outcomes of hearings. Each new case is risk assessed by the manager and supervisors within the CSU, taking into account the victims needs and concerns, completing appropriate requests for special measures to be put in place at court. Screens and video links are the two most common forms of special measures granted at court for DV matters, allowing the victim to not be confronted in the court room or seen face-to-face. These measures have proved to be an effective tool to support victims through the court process when required to give live evidence.

87. Co-located within the WCU office are the 2 DAA's and a CPS co-located clerk. The three agencies working together in the same office allows for smooth communication between the case administration. This increases the effective support to victims and witnesses of DV and enhances the service to some of the most vulnerable. The introduction of DAA's has had a significant positive impact on the level of service provided. They concentrate solely on the victim in the case, providing the necessary support to empower them to assist the prosecution and bring the offender to justice. The DAA's have been given access to appropriate IT based systems to enable them to provide a more effective service. This includes the

court 'Libra' system upon which criminal cases are administered. The WCU are also creating a new post to work with the DAA, dealing with all other witnesses in relation to DV cases to further enhance the already first class service.

88. Currently, there is close cooperation with the Deputy Justices Clerk in the local magistrates' court to improve the timeliness of results in relation to DV matters, as they are aware of the need for the victim to be notified of outcomes in relation to sentencing and conditions of bail expeditiously.

89. The majority of cases are heard at Bromley Magistrates Court and, although it is not a specialist DV court (SDVC), the good practice identified from SDVC's has been utilised in the following ways. Training has been delivered to all magistrates in relation to DV matters to ensure that justice is delivered to a high standard with regard to DV matters. Consideration is given to using specific courtrooms due to their layout and size, ensuring that the victim is more at ease in their surroundings. The Witness Service at the court provides support to victims by arranging pre-court visits. Also placing victims and witnesses in remote rooms in which to wait for cases to be heard. This ensures no contact is made between the parties where special measures apply or where the victims or witnesses feel vulnerable.

90. There is a monthly Prosecution Team Performance meeting (PTPM) to scrutinise all adverse outcomes and try to identify reasons for failed hearings and consider the need for any improvements in relation to case management and victim support. The borough believes that it is vitally important to learn from these failed prosecutions. Therefore high priority is placed on the PTPM meetings. The CJU Manager, the DCI and the WCU manager attend them. The contact and support provided to victims is a key focus through the CPS file, WCU and DAA's contact logs. Also the investigation is reviewed at the same time. Actions are taken from the meeting by those involved and reviewed the following month. Previous actions have included emphasis on risk assessment in cases where the victim wishes to withdraw, supervision of cases prior to referral to CPS and a review of victim contact and how this could be further enhanced. This along with having a dedicated CPS Lawyer, CPS co-worker located in the WCU and the measures put in place by the court as above ensure that there is an effective relationship with all those in the CJS.

D. Preventing Domestic Violence

Freedom Programme

91. This is a 12-week programme provided by the Safer Bromley Partnership designed to support survivors and to help them identify characteristics of a healthy

relationship and to look forward to a life without violence. The courses are run at locations in Penge, Mottingham and Orpington with Crèche facilities provided. Trained facilitators are volunteers from agencies across the borough and three courses are run at each site throughout the year. The borough chose to run the Freedom Programme because it was a nationally accredited scheme. Approximately 180 survivors have attended the Freedom Programme in Bromley in the last two years. To date there has been a 100% satisfaction in the surveys completed by all in attendance at the end of each course.

Sanctuary Scheme supported by the Safer Bromley Van

92. The Sanctuary Scheme provides free home security to those who feel unsafe in their homes due to attack and threats from former partners. This service enables clients to remain safely in their home with their children. Most of the work is contracted to The Safer Bromley Van, an initiative managed by Victim Support. An MPS Crime Prevention Design Advisor surveys the victim's address with a view to fitting additional locks and other security measures without charge. The service includes reinforcing doorframes; fitting window locks, fire proof letterboxes, home fire safety checks and making a safe room within the home. SNT's assist on occasions where there is a risk to staff employed on the Safer Bromley Van. Also in attending addresses with victims/perpetrators (post arrest) to prevent a breach of the peace while one party collects personal property. As well as victims of crime the service is also provided to other vulnerable people.

93. Between 1 April 2007 and 31 March 2008 the Safer Bromley Van dealt with 574 calls of which 137 were related to DV. There were 73 referrals to the Sanctuary Scheme. In the first half the current year there have been 276 calls by the Safer Bromley Van of which 70 relate to DV. There have been 55 referrals to the Sanctuary Scheme.

94. The provision of multi-agency training for non-specialist staff is tailored to ensure that recognition of domestic abuse and early intervention is maximised. The Partnership communications work seeks to provide maximum coverage of help-line and information contact numbers – these are provided in a format that enables victims to retain this valuable information whilst limiting the risk of abusive reactions e.g. generic newspaper placements, supermarket till receipts, pay and display parking tickets.

95. The Partnership has signed up to a three-year target for the increase in reports of domestic violence between 2007 and 2010. These targets were negotiated and agreed in discussion with the Government Office for London and represents an acknowledgement that Domestic Abuse continues to be a widely under-reported crime. As such, it is agreed that the setting of any reduction target would be inappropriate at this stage.

96. The Probation Service in Bromley interview perpetrators released on licence in order to assess their needs. Independent Domestic Abuse Programmes (IDAP) are provided to those perpetrators that have been sentenced to more than 12 months imprisonment.

E. Working in partnership

97. Bromley Police work very closely in partnership with most statutory and voluntary organisations in the borough with the aim of offering the best possible service to those suffering from DV. The main multi-agency group in the borough is the Bromley Domestic Violence Forum. The CSU Detective Inspector is the vice chair of this group. The chair is from Bromley Women's Aid. The group has seventy-eight members who come from both statutory and voluntary organisations and include virtually every service in the borough that is likely to be in contact with anyone suffering from DV. All members of the DV Forum representing their agency at the quarterly Forum meetings must have attended the DV Forum training.

98. The agencies involved are from various departments of the health service including Anti-Natal services, A&E Department, Children's Services, Health Visitors, Health Development Service, Mental Health Services, Teenage Pregnancy Services, Health Centres and Refugee Service. Also, all of the 16 Housing Associations in the borough that provide social housing, the Council Children's and Adult services, Homeless Person Unit, Drug & Alcohol Services, Anti Social Behaviour Team, Education and Education Welfare. All agencies in the CJS including our Magistrates and County Courts, the Probation Service and the CPS. Our voluntary agency members include Bromley Women's Aid, Bromley Victim Support, the Bromley Gypsy Traveller Project, GFS Platform Penge, Somali Well Women Project, Crystal Vision, Relate, Citizen's Advice bureaux, Homestart Bromley & Bromley Welcare.

99. All members of the DV Forum are encouraged to improve the provision of services by their agency clients identified as DV victims and survivors, to fully implement the GLDVP minimum standards for agencies, to spread good practice, to provide networking opportunities.

100. Partnerships on the borough include:

Bromley Women's Aid

101. Providing six refuges in the borough with 36 units for women fleeing from violent relationships (Including one second stage with five self contained flats, one for single women communal living, one self contained for women on prescribed

medication and three general communal refuges.) There are 50 children's bed spaces.

Housing

102. Most survivors would like, and should have the right to stay in their own home. With the correct legal orders in place and access to information and support, survivors should be able to maintain a reasonable quality of life for themselves and their children. The Sanctuary Scheme and the Safer Bromley Van make this possible for many families. Funding for these projects is provided by the Safer Bromley Partnership and the major housing associations in Bromley (Broomeigh, Hyde, Dominion, Penge Churches and South London Families Housing Associations).

One Stop Shop

103. Provides information and advice, operating on two half days each week. It is held at the Citizens Advice Bureau, Penge (Tuesday am) and Relate in Bromley (Thursday pm). One Stop is a welcoming and relaxed place for anyone to obtain advice on Family Law or Housing issues. A police officer from the CSU is always on hand to discuss the client's concerns – Women's Aid and Victim Support are also available to provide emotional support.

Bromley Advocacy Service

104. This service employs two full time advocates (DAAs). The advocates provide support for victims through the legal process when the perpetrator has been charged with a crime. Work includes assistance with health, housing, family law and education matters related to living in an abusive relationship often for a long period of time.

Victim Support

105. Victim Support Bromley is a voluntary organisation offering practical help and emotional support to victims of crime. Daily referrals are received from the MPS, other agencies and directly from victims of crime. Volunteers with specialist training provide specific support for victims of serious crime including domestic abuse. Victim Support also operates the DV Text Line.

DV Text Line

106. A secure number, held at Victim Support for anyone to make contact at minimal cost.

DV Travel Fund

107. Providing free taxis to take victims to and from court if they have to give evidence. The money is raised via a number of local fundraising initiatives (Firewalk, White Ribbon) and has been very well received by many clients.

108. In Oct 2006 Victim Support Bromley secured two years funding from the City Parochial Trust to dedicate half a post to a Domestic Violence worker. This means that Victim Support make personal contact with almost all the referrals received from police on a daily basis. From July 2008 this post has been merged with the Witness Service at Bromley Magistrates Court.

109. The Witness Service at Bromley Magistrates' Court provides pre-trial visits to familiarise anyone called to give evidence. A separate entrance and waiting area on the day of the trial in a comfortable and welcoming environment is provided. Trained volunteers accompany witnesses in court and in the video link suite. The Witness Service and DAA's work closely to communicate results of trials, hearings and bail applications to survivors enabling adequate and timely safety planning in high risk cases.

Safer Bromley Partnership

110. The Safer Bromley Partnership has access to funds of approximately £400,000 from the Area Based Grant received by the Local Strategic Partnership, this money having previously been received via the Safer, Stronger Communities Fund. This does not include dedicated or mainstream contributions from individual partnership agencies. More detail of finances allocated towards projects to tackle domestic abuse is provided under the "Financial Implications" section of this report.

111. The Safer Bromley Partnership has a consistent record of support for initiatives to reduce the harm caused by Domestic Abuse across the borough. Action to tackle DV was a key element of the Community Safety Strategy 2005 – 2008 and has been carried forward into the Community Safety Strategy for 2008 – 2011. The Partnership is chaired by the Council's Executive Member for Public Protection and Safety. In 2006 this Portfolio Holder appointed a dedicated "champion" for DV issues and initiated a coordinated campaign to increase the profile and activity in relation to this issue. In addition to greater awareness, this development provided the groundwork for the development and implementation of the Domestic Abuse Advocates scheme. Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe is the lead councillor for DV and acts as 'Champion' supported by Mr David Gaywood as DV Coordinator.

112. In addition to prioritisation within the Council and CDRP, it is notable that the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) has also chosen to include work in this area within its Local Area Agreement. Bromley's LSP successfully negotiated a comprehensive Public Service Agreement (PSA) project with the GOL. Within this project, a series of demanding stretch targets were negotiated for delivery between 2008 and 2011.

These targets, designed to reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse, are to increase the conviction rate for perpetrators, increase the sanctioned detection rate and increase the number of offences reported. There is a significant reward element to this programme if the targets are met at the end of the three-year period.

113. In terms of consultation, the work undertaken within the Partnership to address domestic abuse is managed and coordinated via the DV Forum.

F. Training

114. In October/November 2007 the BOCU ran a training series for all its police officers, which included mandatory DV training. As a result the BOCU now has 94% of officers trained in the TP full domestic violence awareness training. In addition the BOCU have run a series of two day courses aimed at 72 frontline staff both on response and on SNT's This course involves advanced communication skills and also revisits the 124d and the subject of risk assessment. The course also raises awareness of forensic potential at scenes of DV to corroborate the victim's account

115. The VSS delivers various workshops to secondary schools and the Youth Offending Team (YOT). Bullying and the use of power and control in relationships are included in these sessions. Young people are informed about the 'cycle of abuse' and ways to access help and report crime if necessary. The aim of this work is to expose abusive and threatening behaviour as the 'wrong way to get things done' and explore non-violent ways of staying safe.

116. CSU and LGBT Liaison Officers have attended a presentation on issues faced in the Transgender Community to raise awareness in dealing with crimes alleged within this community.

G. Employee Domestic Violence

117. The BOCU uses a number of options for dealing with members of staff who are either victims of DV or who are believed to be perpetrators. The safety of the victim is paramount in all investigations. Police officers and police staff will be dealt with no differently from any other member of the public. Positive action is expected and arrests are made. The CSU DI oversees such investigations. An officer of a rank more senior to the arrested officer will conduct the interview in the majority of instances. When an officer is arrested the Duty Inspector and SMT of the station or branch to which they are attached are informed. The Directorate of Professional Standards and the SMT at Bromley are also informed.

118. The CSU DI and/or Crime Manager will arrange for the investigation to be dealt with by another BOCU where the accused officer is serving at and resident in LBB. This has happened twice in the last 24 months. Where an arrest is made at the time of the allegation the officer will be taken to another police Station. This has happened once in the last 24 months.

119. Line management involvement and support networks are afforded to victims who are employed by the MPS at Bromley. As a case study, a Bromley officer was the victim of DV at the hands of his wife. His line manager and SMT were made aware. He was moved from frontline duties to a less pressured environment. He was afforded counselling through Occupational Health (OH) and allowed flexible working to assist with childcare. He was provided with the details of support services to help him deal with his wife's alcoholism. When an allegation was made against the officer he was arrested and dealt with away from LBB.

H. Project Umbra

120. Work reflecting the strands of project Umbra are contained within the report.

I. Continuous Improvement

121. In July 2007 the Home Office announced positive results of a trial of police officers using Body Worn Video cameras that took place in Plymouth. The use of cameras by police had improved the evidence in domestic violence cases and provided the courts with graphic evidence of injuries, the impact on victims and the behavior of offenders at the time of the police intervention and arrest. The Home Office provided limited funding for this technology to be tested in all 43 police forces in England and Wales.

122. Realising the potential to improve the capture of evidence and increase positive criminal justice outcomes in regard to DV in Bromley, the SMT lobbied Territorial Policing Head Quarters (TPHQ) to become a pilot site for the MPS. Bromley and Camden were selected to pilot the new equipment and Bromley have been allocated 45 miniature cameras for officers to wear when called to incidents.

123. The Bromley pilot will go live at the end of October 2008. Officers wearing the equipment will be assigned to DV incidents as a priority. We will be identifying trained officers on our call handling system whereby call dispatchers will be able to

send body worn video equipped officers first to DV calls. The launch of the pilot in Bromley will be accompanied by a publicity campaign. Our aim is to increase detections and to capture best possible evidence. To provide additional support to victims and witnesses by mounting robust prosecutions based on video evidence. The Plymouth experience showed that suspects pleaded guilty more often when video evidence was used and fewer victims were required to give evidence. The pilot will be fully evaluated by TPHQ.

124. It is recognized that improvement is possible in regard CAD type 29 data through the daily operations meeting to ensure that the BOCU correctly records all incidents of DV. Emphasis is placed on taking positive action and arresting perpetrators where the opportunities arise. Good and bad practice is raised at the DMM. The BOCU have embarked upon steps to increase the quality and quantity of CRIS investigations that are supervised by Sergeants. An inspection/review process is monitoring and driving improvement. This involves uniform inspectors dip sampling and reviewing the standard of initial investigation, compliance with SOP's and then standard of supervision by Sergeants applied to initial investigation.

125. The following represent further exploration that is taking place within the Safer Bromley Partnership and also areas of working/issues that need to be raised pan-London.

126. DV Advocacy – working in partnership, VSS, are looking to have more ways in which people can access confidential advice and support throughout the borough – drop in facilities at community flats, health centres and family centres are to be explored however it is vital that the first point of contact should be a person who is professionally trained and linked in with the relevant services. This would require investment in further DAA's working on a floating basis with the various partners and agencies in the borough.

127. Court results - The communication of the results of hearings, bail applications and trials to the Witness Care Workers or DAA's should ideally be immediate in DV cases. At present results do not appear on the Libra system for at least 24 hours and there is no set procedure for CPS or administration at the Court to advise results to those working directly with the victim. The obtaining of results relies on good will of staff at both the Police Station and the Court working in tandem. This impacts on safety planning which is paramount to those in the partnership working directly with victims of DV. The WCU Manager is currently exploring ways in which the Libra system can be flagged as DV to increase the response time involved in update of court results.

128. HM Prison Service (HMP) - Communication from HMP regarding release dates need be improved. At present (if sentence is under one year) the onus is on the victim to find out when the perpetrator is to be released. Ideally this situation should

be reversed so that survivors and their families can re-establish their lives without the constant worry that the perpetrator has been released without their knowledge. If release dates (and information about licence or conditions) are communicated in a timely manner steps can be taken to arrange injunctions and address safety measures to protect high-risk victims from further harm. NOMS (National Offender Management Service) appears in practice an inadequate medium by which victims and their families can obtain information. Policies are needed between the MPS and HMP with agreed protocols and holding to account.

129. Probation Service and HMP – Despite seeing all persons released on licence, perpetrator programmes, drug and alcohol programmes appear to only be available to those that are sentenced for a term exceeding 12 months. The majority of perpetrators are sentenced to periods in custody that are less than 12 months. Therefore in many cases assistance that should be provided according to need is denied. This applies in prisons where short-term prisoners are not able to access the programmes mentioned above. Improvement needs to be made in outreach of services for drug and alcohol misuse. A case in point would be that the CSU DI and a DS attended a prison in Buckinghamshire to offer alcohol and mental health services to a short-term prisoner who was a perpetrator for the one of the MARAC high-risk victims. There was no assistance offered in prison. Proactivity of drug and alcohol workers is to be written into future funding contracts from LBB. The MPS needs to lobby the Probation Service to provide necessary support to short term prisoners.

130. Survivor awareness - The Safer Bromley Partnership is investigating the setting up of self help groups throughout the borough, the groups will be run by survivors for survivors. The aim is to provide an extension or follow up to the Freedom Programme.

J. Financial Implications

131. The delivery of targets under the PSA agreement within the LAA has generated the provision of £75,000 per year for the provision of the Domestic Abuse Advocacy Project. This funding provides for the employment, management and “clinical” supervision of two full time advocates. In addition, a budget of £40,000 per year is allocated to the employment and support of the borough’s Domestic Violence Coordinator. Additional funding is generated by delivery of training courses and this funding is used to provide items such as personal safety alarms etc. Promotional material and advertising costs are met from generic communications budgets held by the Safer Bromley Partnership.

132. The Sanctuary Project associated with the Safer Bromley Van costs £10,000. The One Stop Shop service, provided on two half days each week, is largely resourced by voluntary staff attendance. All those providing advice and guidance give their time without charge. However, recent estimates indicate that this “in kind” contribution amounts to a total of £2,700 per annum.

133. In 2008 the Council’s Executive Member for Public Protection and Safety allocated a potential £7,500 for the development and initiation of the “self help” group for survivors of domestic abuse mentioned above. Work to progress this initiative is ongoing.

K. Race and Equality impact

134. Officers from PY CSU will investigate crime with the same voracity irrespective of a person’s race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation or religion. CSU officers have taken part in presentations to the Somali Well Women’s Project in order to reduce the stigma attached to the reporting of domestic violence. Officers were able to publicise services available within the Somali community and field lengthy question and answer sessions

135. The BOCU have eight LGBT Liaison Officers. The CSU DI and DS attend regular LGBT Liaison meetings. Following the meetings LGBT LO’s staff a surgery at a local LGBT public house. This is coupled with a further monthly surgery in a local library in order to reduce reluctance in the LGBT community to report crime including DV. The BOCU is looking to expand its activity in order to include use of the Gaydar and Gaydar girls Internet sites.

136. Victim Support is available to both male and female survivors of domestic abuse. They are conscious that this crime does not respect age, gender, culture, sexual orientation, financial standing or physical ability. Apart from dealing with referrals of crime from the police, partners and the public VSS seek to work proactively in the community to promote their work and the support they can give to anyone affected by DV. They do this by taking an active role within the Safer Bromley Partnership and linking with service providers and forums for elders, youth, faith and other minority groups. Volunteers are recruited from all sections of the community and are representative in terms of age and ethnicity. Special training is provided for volunteers working in the Witness Liaison Service at the Court and in the community if they are required to support victims of serious crime, this includes DV.

Report Author

Paul White

Detective Inspector

Bromley Police Community Safety Unit

Glossary

ABE	Achieving best evidence
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
BCP	Branch Crown Prosecutor
BOCU	Borough operational command unit
CAADA	Coordinated action against domestic abuse
CAD	Computer aided dispatch
CAIT	Child abuse investigation team
CDRP	Crime and disorder reduction partnership
CJS	Criminal justice system
CJSSS	Criminal Justice Simple Speedy Summons
CMU	Crime Management Unit
CPS	Crown prosecution service
CRIS	Crime report information system
CSU	Community Safety Unit
DAA	Domestic Violence Advocate

DI	Detective Inspector
DMM	Daily management meeting
DS	Detective Sergeant
DV	Domestic Violence
FYTD	Financial year to date
GOL	Government Office for London
IBO	Integrated Borough Operations
LAA	Local area Agreement
LBB	London Borough of Bromley
LCJB	Local Criminal Justice Board
LGBT	Lesbian gay bisexual transgender
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children's Board (s)
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
NCRS	National crime recording standards
NSY	New Scotland Yard
OH	Occupational Health
PTPM	Prosecution Team Performance Meeting
SD	Sanction detection
SDVC	Specialist Domestic Violence Court
SMT	Senior management team
SOCO	Scenes of crimes officer

SOP(s)	Standard operation procedure/ procedures
VCD	Violent Crime Directorate
VSS	Victim Support Scheme
WCU	Witness Care Unit
YOT	Youth Offending Team