



Metropolitan Police Authority

**Metropolitan Police Authority Domestic Violence Board
5th April 2006**

Minutes of the meeting

Introductions

Board Members

Amanda Dellar, Government Office for London
Anni Marjoram, Greater London Authority
Cindy Butts, deputy chair of MPA (Co-Chair)
Commander Steve Allen, Project Umbra Programme Board Chair
Davina James-Hanman, Greater London Domestic Violence Project
Doug Flight, Association of London Government
Dru Sharpling, London Criminal Justice Board
Elizabeth Howlett, MPA London Assembly Member
Helen Slinger, Government Office for London
Kirsten Hearn, MPA Independent Member

MPS:

Commander Steve Allen, Project Umbra Programme Board Chair
Denise Milani, Deputy Director for Diversity and Citizen Focus Directorate and ACPO portfolio lead on Women as Victims and Offenders
Yasmin Rehman, Senior Partnership Consultant, TP Crime Directorate
Chief Inspector Julia Pendry, Brent Borough Commander
Vicky Kielinger, Senior Criminologist, Performance, Development and Monitoring Unit, Diversity and Citizen Focus Directorate

MPA:

Hamida Ali, Policy Development Officer, Race & Diversity
Laurence Gouldbourne, Head of Race & Diversity

Pan-London & community representatives:

Beryl Foster OBE, Director, Standing Together
Chris Monckton, Victim Support London
Claire Goodman, Executive Director, Jewish Women's Aid
Daniel Blake, Adult Protection Officer, Action on Elder Abuse
Jocelyn Watson, Project Co-ordinator, Imkaan
Lorna Dubois, Child & Woman Abuse Studies Unit, London Metropolitan University
Michael Verrier, Broken Rainbow LGBT Domestic Violence Service UK
Najma Ebrahim, Co-ordinator, Muslim Women's Helpline
Penny Kennedy, Services Manager, Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP)

Raymond Stone, Project Co-ordinator, Everyman Project
Richard Chipping, London Centre for Personal Safety & Chair of MPS Sapphire IAG
Sandra Horley, OBE, Chief Executive of Refuge

Apologies:

Aneeta Prem, MPA Magistrate Member
Anne Coughlan, CEO, Victim Support London
Asha Jama, Specialist Project Manager, Beverly Lewis House
Baroness Helena Kennedy (Co-Chair)
Brian Paddick, Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Catherine Pleasance, Chief Executive, Victim Support Croydon
Esther Brewster-Thizy, Chief Executive, Croydon Women's Aid
Hannana Siddiqui, Joint Co-ordinator, Southall Black Sisters
Helen Bowes, Greater London Authority
Hilary McCollum, Director, Social Policy & Grants, Association of London Government
Jo Todd, Director, Respect
Judge Marilyn Mornington, Family Justice Council
Monica Wilson, Director, Change
Prof. Betsy Stanko, Senior Advisor, MPS Strategic Analysis, Strategic Planning & Risk
Roger King, Director of Crime and Drugs Division, Government Office for London
Susan Paterson, Senior Criminologist, MPS Diversity & Citizen Focus Directorate

Terms of Reference

1. Hamida Ali said the aim was to keep the TOR both broad and brief. The three main areas are:
 - (a) Borough performance;
 - (b) Directorates that sit centrally within the organisation but have a direct interface with domestic violence;
 - (c) Project Umbra.

2. Hamida said the board meetings would be scheduled on a quarterly basis. The membership is made up of statutory agencies such as ALG, GOL, GLA, MPA, LCJB, and GLDVP (the only non-statutory member but with responsibility for implementing the London Domestic Violence Strategy). Community interest groups will then be invited to attend to advise and inform the Board.

3. Kirsten Hearn asked if there was a need to reflect in the TOR the importance of hearing from community groups who don't have obvious reference to domestic violence, for example disabled people. The MPS may not have the correct knowledge base in this area and so we should look to outside groups for this. The Board agreed this.

ACTION: HA

4. Anni Marjoram questioned the role of this Board in relation to the mayor's London-wide strategy for domestic violence; as the meetings will only be quarterly it is important to use the time judiciously. The Greater London Domestic Violence

Forum and its steering group deal with the more specific areas such as domestic violence in the disabled community. We need to be clear on the areas that can be covered within this timetable of meetings. Cindy Butts agreed that it is important not to simply duplicate the work of other groups. She suggested building into the work plan a themed discussion on under represented groups and exploring these issues through our links with other groups. Commander Steve Allen, Project Umbra Programme Board Chair, said we need to work out how to take issues from Project Umbra to this group. Project Umbra involves some complex relationships between different bodies. Steve suggested this group should strive for a broad overview when asking boroughs to account for the work they are doing on domestic violence. Project Umbra is only part of the wider strategic approach and this group is not the appropriate forum for holding the MPS accountable against Project Umbra. Davina agreed that it would be of no benefit for the group to duplicate either work or representation done by other groups. Anni said that the Board needs to be careful how it uses its time and explore the idea of themed meetings to avoid unnecessary duplication.

Membership of the Board

5. Cindy said the membership of the Board has been kept to a manageable number of people. It will be possible to draw on the experience of relevant groups as the meetings progress. Cindy informed the group that Anthony Wills, the Local Government Association Partnership Officer (DV) would be joining the Board.
6. Elizabeth Howlett asked what representation there would be from the MPS. Hamida said Commander Steve Allen had been asked to attend this preliminary meeting to decide the role of the Board around accountability for MPS performance and what representation from the MPS would be appropriate. Steve said he is accountable for the MPS performance on domestic violence crime. He said he was not sure it would be appropriate to sit on the Board, as it is the Board's job to hold him to account. He would feel more comfortable acting as a resource when needed and as an advisor on Project Umbra. The Board agreed that Steve would take on the role of an advisor but a separation between his role as MPS lead on domestic violence and his role within the Board would be maintained.

Board Review Process

7. Hamida said she would take responsibility for keeping track of how the recommendations of the Board are carried out locally in the boroughs.
8. Anni informed the group that Anthony Mayer^a and Neale Coleman^b had chaired meetings with the Chief Executives of the London Boroughs. The aim of these meetings was to determine what work the local authorities do. Profiles were made on all the boroughs and distributed to the Chief Executives. One of the problems with work on domestic violence is that it does not fall under the remit of a single

^a GLA Chief Executive

^b Policy Director to the Mayor of London

department and therefore no single department can be held accountable for matters such as budgeting. Anni said these profiles would be pulled together and distributed to the group. She suggested it might be useful to have this information produced for future meetings when hearing borough presentations. This was agreed.

ACTION: AM

Domestic Violence Board Code of Conduct

9. Laurence Gouldbourne said the purpose of the code of conduct is to establish ground rules for both the meetings and what happens between meetings. It is about signing up for a shared set of beliefs and values. The code of conduct exists within the GLA family group code of conduct. Laurence referred to the 'expectations' section and said that although constructive criticism is welcome, it will not be considered appropriate to turn this into a personal attack when reviewing papers submitted by the MPS and other stakeholders.

The commissioning brief

10. Davina James-Hanman said she would very much like to see the commissioning brief as there seems to be no definition for some of the things being asked for. Hamida said she would circulate the commissioning brief to the Board members. In outline she said the brief tried to follow both the MPS and the MPA recommendations from the Second London Domestic Violence Strategy. It asks qualitative questions around the kind of partnership work the borough is doing. What is being done to engage with the community? What kind of equality analysis is being made? Whether there is disproportionality amongst victims based on the equality strands and what is being done about it? The data requirements threw up questions around what data can be routinely supplied by the MPS. What data being asked for is held by other agencies? What data do they have that cannot be fed through the system?

ACTION: HA

11. Helen Slinger suggested that data showing a larger picture of where the borough reports to the Board fit into is produced for each board meeting. Anni agreed to provide Hamida with a blank copy of the profile submitted to Chief Executives of the London Boroughs, as she had mentioned earlier, and that this would prove to be useful for future questions from the Board. Steve said this was an example of where the Board and Project Umbra might work together on a commonly agreed data set and put the data requirements across the whole pattern of work.

ACTION: SA

12. Cindy said that the Board needed to work towards an agreement on the data that is being sought across the key organisations involved. The Board needs to make sure there is consistency and where there are gaps in knowledge, bring in appropriate guest speakers to the meeting. The Board needs to be clear on authoritative definitions used and make these definitions explicit to the boroughs.

Borough Report

Havering Borough Report

The representatives from Havering were:

- Chief Superintendent Sultan Taylor, Havering Borough Commander
- Detective Inspector Iqbal Singh, Havering Borough
- Detective Inspector Chris Krelle, Havering CSU Manager
- Diane Egan, Community Safety Officer, London Borough of Havering
- Jenny Cargill, Borough Manager, Victim Support Havering
- Martin Gardner, Chair, Havering Domestic Violence Forum
- Tarjinder Sehanger, Interim DV Co-ordinator, London Borough of Havering
- Vicki Huckle, Manager, Havering Women's Aid

13. The Borough Commander said the catalyst for the work Havering has done on domestic violence was the murder of Lyn Madden. The agencies then worked on a review and the recommendations included information sharing and training. The MPS are committed to maintaining genuine partnerships with other groups involved in domestic violence. Due to the change in police culture domestic violence strategies have now been made more effective. All officers are now held to account and domestic violence is high on the agenda. The Community Safety Unit is now highly effective and has received commendations for leadership and good work. Havering hold partnership days to support victims and offer them a support package. Havering have a Critical Friends programme that invites other groups to give honest feedback on Havering's initiatives. The DV Advocacy initiative has now been in existence since November 2005. The DV Advocate supports victims through the court case procedure and more results are now being seen in court. The Borough Commander said Havering would like to do more to tackle domestic violence but resourcing is an issue. For example Havering would like to have a DV Court with DV specialised lawyers and training with magistrates. The MPS would also like to do more preventative work in schools.

Questions

14. Kirsten asked how Havering have engaged with the range of community members in the borough, particularly minority groups such as disabled people? The CSU Manager said that every crime is given its own personal strategy. Havering liaise with a number of organisations outside the police service to tackle individual cases.
15. Dru Sharpling asked about the Sanction Detection Rate. Does Havering have performance data to show the conversion rate for offences brought to justice? The CSU Manager said that this data is not broken down. The Borough Commander added that the conviction rate is now a lot higher due to the DV Advocate work being done. Jenny Cargill said court statistics were showing an 80% failure rate getting cases to court. Since the appointment of the DV Advocate, statistics show that 100% of victims went to court in the month of March. A lot of not guilty pleas have also been changed to guilty pleas at trial.

16. Dru asked how this has worked in the context of Witness Care Units. The CSU Manager said that the role of the DV Advocate is to complement the Witness Care Units and the work of the MPS. All contacts go through the Witness Care Unit so that a proper log is made of all cases.
17. Anni said there appears to be a drop in incidents in the Safer Neighbourhood Team areas. Will Havering continue to monitor the impact of the Safer Neighbourhood Team? The Borough Commander said they have had a real impact on disorder calls. The MPS would like the teams to become more involved in domestic violence cases; the data is broken down into wards to aid the teams. The MPS would like the teams to become more involved in the follow up side of cases and also looking into contributory factors such as drug abuse.
18. Elizabeth asked if evidence is gathered despite a victim withdrawing their statement. The Borough Commander said the MPS do try to work with victims but in the cases where victims withdraw their statement, the police do try to continue without the statement.
19. Elizabeth asked about issues such as housing and child protection that surround domestic violence cases. Diane Egan said a child protection policy has been developed. There is a clear path to social services. 70% of referrals to social services have a domestic violence background. Each family have a dedicated plan to tackle the domestic issues surrounding each case. The CSU Manager said work done on domestic violence cases is all about safe guarding the victim. The introduction of the 124d¹ form is all about the early gathering of evidence to be used in the case and this has been a very important part of the Havering strategy. Elizabeth asked if Havering have a good liaison with the housing department. Diane said the relationship is not ideal but as of last month a working policy group has been set up to develop a housing policy. Also a Housing Vulnerable Person's Panel was set up to discuss cases that are in dispute.
20. Davina referred to Havering utilizing standard operating procedures when more than one issue occurs in the same crime or the same family. How do the MPS deal with this when there are policy clashes? The CSU Manager said all relevant policies have to be adhered to and officers are told to gather evidence for all aspects of the case. Officers work with the CPS on these matters with the victim's safety in mind.
21. Cindy asked what safeguards are in place to ensure that Havering's work will continue if, for example, the current team were to move on. The Borough Commander said leadership comes from the top. Succession planning still needs to be considered in order to pass on knowledge and promote continuity. This issues will be followed-up by the Board.

¹ Form 124d: an initial reporting form introduced in 2004. It is a risk assessment tool to improve initial investigation and effective evidence gathering. The form seeks to improve victim safety by identifying those at particular risk and in need of positive intervention.

22. Anni outlined the meetings that were held with the Chief Executives of the boroughs. She asked how the team felt about their relationship with the Local Authority. Would they consider that domestic violence is a priority with the Authority? Martin Gardner said he has been seconded to the Local Authority from the Primary Care Trust. There are a lot of secondments and partnerships in order to share experience and knowledge. Anni asked how much money was received from the Local Authority for the Local Domestic Violence Forum? The Borough Commander said that no funding was received and political intervention was needed. Havering is constantly pushing for resources but support from the MPA would be very welcome. The MPA could help to give an impetus to prioritising domestic violence with the Local Authority. Diane said the team now report directly to the Chief Executive's and domestic violence is becoming more of a priority. A joint action group has been set up with the Local Authority.
23. Elizabeth asked how helpful is the local Probation Service; Diane said the Probation Service is a member of the Local Domestic Violence Forum, although replacements for the two representatives who left took 8 months to secure. The Borough Commander added that the probation service work with prolific priority offenders. The MPS have asked them to work with domestic violence offenders but they are against working on this at this time as there are other avenues like MAPPA² for this. Davina said resistance from the Probation Service is a pan-London problem.
24. Cindy said a lot of the data on victim's ethnicity is marked as unknown. Why is this the case and how are services tailored to their specific needs? Diane said the information on this is available. Havering has a small ethnic minority representation, but they make up a high proportion of the domestic violence cases. A lot of people work in Havering but live in other boroughs. There are few places of worship so it is hard to engage with the community but the Local Authority recently organised an event that was very well attended. The Borough Commander said the data is available. He said the disability data needs to be refined. Cindy requested that this type of data is made available to the Board when requested.

ACTION: HAVERING

25. Beryl Foster asked if the positive effect of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams is due to better reporting. The Borough Commander said the number of incidents has levelled out. A greater number of incidents are treated as crimes and yes there are better reporting levels.

² Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) were introduced under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000) and strengthened further in the Criminal Justice Act (2003). They essentially require police, prison and probation to work together to manage the risks posed by dangerous offenders in the community. Specifically the legislation requires the police, prison and probation services acting jointly as the 'Responsible Authority' to (i) establish arrangements for assessing and managing the risks posed by sexual and violent offenders; (ii) review and monitor the arrangements; and, as part of the reviewing and monitoring arrangements, (iii) prepare and publish an annual report on their operation.

26. Sandra Horley asked what plans there are for tracking the turn of events in a case from arrest to trial? She also asked what work is done to ascertain the victim's satisfaction with how the case is handled? The CSU Manager said that when an officer attends a crime he must conduct a risk assessment. The victim is contacted at later stages dependent on the risk assessment results. Panic alarms are available if necessary and victims can be offered witness protection. He felt Havering goes over and above the Victims Charter. Sandra asked if the data is available on this process. Diane said the DV Forum had developed a DV policy for the magistrates court which sets clear time lines for what should happen in a case. Cases are tracked and data is reviewed monthly. Dru asked if cases are managed 'for success' through the courts. Is the aim to secure a conviction? Diane said the policy for court needs to be formally adopted by the Havering Community Safety Partnership (HCSP) and has not been an easy process. The aim of the policy is to ensure that the cases have a successful outcome for the victim.

27. Sandra asked what support is available for ethnic minority groups. Diane said there is access to interpreters. Ashiana, a project supporting and providing safe temporary housing for young South Asian, Turkish and Iranian women, is brought in to interpret for Asian women quite often.

28. Barbra Young asked how many cases going to court have hostile witnesses and how many are referred to Victim Support? Jenny said there are around 300 referrals to Victim Support per year and this is increasing now there is a DV Advocate. The DV Advocate focuses on working with victims going to court in order to keep the workload manageable. There is currently only enough funding for 18 hours per week for the DV Advocate. Beryl said funding for DV Advocates must be shared across the agencies. It is a concern that students and volunteers are used in this role.

29. Summary of Action Points for Havering

- Equalities monitoring – How data according to ethnicity, age, gender and any data available in relation to sexual orientation, disability and religion shape services locally? How does Havering engage with the range of community members in the borough, particularly minority groups such as disabled people? What does 'every crime is given its own personal strategy' actually entail and which organisations does Havering liaise with outside the police service to tackle individual cases. A significant proportion of Havering's ethnicity data of victims reporting domestic violence was recorded as 'unknown'. More detailed data across a broad spectrum of the borough communities is crucial in shaping locally responsive services and should be made available to the Board.
- Disproportionality – from the ethnicity data which is available, black and minority ethnic victims are disproportionately reporting domestic violence incidents – DVB members were interested in any work the BOCU may be doing to understand this information.

- Update on the local Joint Action Group specifically engaging minority communities.
- Procedures for tracking progress of domestic violence cases.
- Funding for local domestic violence advocacy for survivors.
- Further analysis of those cases involving witness summonses.
- Succession planning around DV work.
- Impact of the Safer Neighbourhood Team on DV incidents

Borough Report

Croydon Borough Report

The representatives from Croydon were:

- Chief Superintendent Mark Gore, Croydon Borough Commander
- Detective Chief Inspector Mark Stockford, Croydon Borough Crime Manager
- Detective Inspector Matt Robins, Croydon CSU Manager
- Barbra Young, Croydon Domestic Violence Advocacy Service
- Gloria Eveleigh, Adult Protection Co-ordinator, London Borough of Croydon
- Jill Maddison, Domestic Violence Policy Advisor, London Borough of Croydon

30. The Borough Commander said Croydon have the largest population in London. 27% of crime figures are wounding and violence and 5000 of these are domestic violence cases. Croydon are committed to improving their service. In July 2004 the Racial and Violent Crime Task force were invited to review current policy and as a result of this staffing levels were increased in the Community Safety Unit. Form 124d is used and there is a focus on repeat victimisation and a full time officer for this. The processes used are looked at daily and active supervision is very much encouraged. There are weekly and monthly performance management meetings to this end. Croydon are currently reorganising the Community Safety Unit to bring it inside the Family Justice Centre. £500,000 has been invested in the Family Justice Centre which opened in December 2005. There are 41 partners within the centre who attend a weekly Operation Mangers meeting. The centre needs a leader to bring together the services. Continuing funding is a key issue. Sanction detection rates have increased from 13.3% to 19.1% but he does not feel sanction detection rates are an effective measure of domestic violence and said effective measures are a reduction in the number of incidents and a reduction in the number of repeat victimisation. Most important is meeting the victim's needs and Croydon has a process in place to support victims through the court.

Questions

31. Elizabeth said the data shows more cases going to civil court and asked the reason for this. Croydon has a specialist domestic violence court and they are trying to monitor why victims choose the civil court as a route. Is it because they can go to

court faster or if they feel the family court offers a route that deters further violence? A crude survey has been done and 100 questionnaires were returned through the Advocacy Service. This supports the view that it is down to time, feelings about if a sentence is a deterrent and feelings of safety over going through the court process. Only a small percentage of cases go through a specialist court. Croydon are looking at increasing the safety of current and future victims.

32. Elizabeth said surely serious assault cases must be directed through the criminal court. Jill said victims are not directed one way or another. The Borough Crime Manager said that if the case is serious, officers would pursue the case without the victim's support. Jill said an aim of the Family Justice Centre is to pick up on all the cases that do not go to court, not as an alternative to appropriate criminal investigation.
33. Anni outlined the meetings that were held with the Chief Executives of the boroughs. She asked what kind of support and leadership is given by Croydon Borough Council. The Borough Commander said a good level of support is received. The council have been a driving force in the Safer Croydon Partnership. However, some areas are better than others. For example housing support could be improved. Anni asked what could be done to bring Housing on board. Jill said that as Policy Supervisor she can access Council directly and they do intervene quickly when called upon.
34. Helen said the Croydon Local Authority had agreed to a Local Area Agreement linked to domestic violence. Did the Borough Commander see this as a positive step forward, particularly with reference to his previous comments on sanction detection? The Borough Commander said they picked a target of domestic violence to reflect the commitment to addressing the issue. It also acted as part of the catalyst to change the way domestic violence is measured. A system that measures satisfaction rates, criminal and civil action.
35. Kirsten asked what positive impact has been seen on domestic violence cases in marginalised groups in the borough. Barbra said there has been a rise in the number of LGBT couples coming forward who are happy to disclose that they are in a lesbian or gay relationship. The Borough Commander said Detective Sergeants are given core groups to lead such as disabled and LGBT couples. This ensures that all staff have an identified and designated lead sergeant. There is training given on disability and elder abuse and links to the CSU. Jill said part of the planning for the Family Justice Centre was to bring all the relevant groups under one roof. To be able to provide a full service to all groups of people including minority groups.
36. Cindy said age, gender and ethnicity data is not reflected in the submission. How does this impact on Croydon's response? The CSU Manager said that victims come from a wide range of communities within Croydon. The Borough Commander said most incidents occur in the more deprived areas to the north of the borough or in New Addington and he felt there were no issues around disproportionality. The

Borough Crime Manager said that a number of networks including the Black and Ethnic Minority Forum were available when called on.

37. Cindy asked for an explanation of cases categorised as Other Accepted Crime. The Borough Crime Manager said this was crime that did not fall into recognised categories, for example nuisance calls.
38. Cindy asked how confident they were that the level of policy compliance is 100% in cases of GBH and above. The Borough Crime Manager said first line supervisors supervise all crime reports. The Community Safety Unit Detective Sergeant and the DI check all crime reports for minimum standards. This information is available at the morning management meeting chaired by the Chief Superintendent and duty officers are held to account for failing to comply. The Sapphire team investigates rape specific offences.
39. Michael Verrier asked if data was gender specific. Cindy asked for more detailed data across a broad spectrum of the borough communities.
40. Cindy asked what funding is available for advocacy work. Jill listed a number of initiatives including lay workers, local authority funding and applications to charitable trusts.
41. Cindy asked what the internal position on domestic violence was within the Borough. The CSU Manager said there is an internal/employee MPS domestic violence policy, to which all BOCUs must adhere. Cindy acknowledged the policy but asked for the CSU Manager to give the Board an idea of how it was being implemented within Croydon, particularly their understanding of the victim's experiences to their response – how are police staff or officers who are perpetrators dealt with and what support is given to those who are victims of DV within Croydon? The question was not adequately answered by the borough and will be followed-up at subsequent Board meetings.
42. Sandra asked for an elaboration on comments made about sanction detection rates. The Borough Commander said the aim is to reduce repeat victimisation and detection is not the best outcome. The focus needs to be on meeting the needs of the victim.
43. Anni said it had been implied that domestic violence happens in deprived areas of the borough only. Data shows that domestic violence does not lodge in any one category of society. The Borough Commander agreed that domestic violence is an issue across the board but that the data showed most incidents occurred to the north of the borough.
44. Beryl asked how lay advocates work to exchange information with the police. Can they add input on what effect the case is having on the victim's life? How are high-

risk cases managed in the Family Justice Centre? Jill said that information flow in the centre is considered very important. Advocates do not have to be CAT trained but they are all experienced and skilled.

45. Elizabeth asked what level of support is received from the Probation Service. Jill said the specialist court runs an Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP) with 6 strands. There are currently 45 men waiting to go on these courses.

46. Elizabeth asked what is the definition of the category repeat victimisation and how is this figure calculated? The CSU Manager said data is analysed over a 12 month period and a victim who appears more than once in that time is considered to be a victim of repeat victimisation. Beryl said this could mean the same victim but different perpetrators. Cindy said she would like to see more meaningful analysis of data from Croydon in the future.

47. Cindy asked what the sanction detection rate was for GBH and above? Sanction detection rate was for GBH in Croydon is 45%.

48. Cindy said Croydon are on the cusp of making positive changes but there are several issues to pursue. Cindy said it is important for the police not to hide behind the good work done by the Family Justice Centre.

49. Summary of action points for Croydon

- Equalities monitoring – how data according to ethnicity, age, gender and any data available in relation to sexual orientation, disability and religion shape services locally. For example, Croydon's data on victims disaggregated according to ethnicity showed that those victims where their data was recorded as 'unknown' totalled higher than records for all 16 ethnicity specific categories added together – the Board's concern was that without this knowledge, how does the organisation shape locally responsive services? This particular issue is MPS-wide but it is important that the BOCU uses this information and looks at work to capture accurate data.
- The internal response to officers and police staff who are survivors and perpetrators of domestic violence – while the Board recognises that an internal MPS policy exists, further insight needs to be given into how the policy is implemented within Croydon BOCU and how police staff and officers who have experienced domestic violence view the BOCU's response.
- Further analysis of the civil and criminal outcomes – there was a concern among some members of the DVB that there appeared to be an 'over-reliance' on the civil court system by Croydon BOCU. However, Croydon BOCU felt that their work with the local partnership and the local authority e.g. the Family Justice Centre (FJC), mitigated against performing highly against the sanction detection rate target. The local authority informed the board that the FJC is designed to provide access to services to survivors whose cases may not be pursued through the criminal justice system. Therefore DVB members felt that in addition

to supporting the work in relation to the civil system, there needed to be a greater understanding of where improvements could be made to build robust cases which, where possible, can rely on sources of evidence independent of the victim.

- Further analysis of repeat victimisation data and how this is informing the BOCU
- Further analysis of what is 'other accepted crime' – the highest recorded crime category in Croydon's performance data – this is higher than common assault.
- Role of Safer Neighbourhood Teams in the local response.
- Further analysis work on positive arrests.
- Feedback on the Violence Focus Desk and how this is strengthening the local response.
- Any longer-term prevention work such as education in schools.

Overview of Project Umbra

50. Yasmin Rehman spoke on behalf of Commander Steve Allen. Yasmin said Project Umbra was a multi-agency board pulling together organisations with a criminal justice focus. The aim is to stop the violence and hold perpetrators accountable whilst not losing sight of the victim's safety. Project Umbra tries to get the MPS to focus on effective evidence gathering and working with the CPS. Project Umbra works towards effective prosecution and increasing the number of victims who stay within the process. Risk identification and management is a key area.

51. Project Umbra is integrated into the Violent Crime Strategies and will be delivered at a local level. Responsibility is taken from the front line upwards. Project Umbra is accountable to the London Criminal justice Board and to this Domestic Violence Board.

52. The six Project Umbra strands looked at improving performance and data sharing, advocacy and support to victims, children in domestic violence households, offender management, integrated laws and courts, and domestic homicide review.

53. Cindy asked Yasmin to distribute the work plan on Project Umbra.

ACTION: YR

54. Sandra asked if there are any particular challenges Project Umbra faces. Yasmin said the project wants to highlight domestic violence as a priority issue. There is the wider impact of domestic violence on the family and children are key in preventative work. Funding in both the voluntary and statutory sector are also issues.

Data and time of next meeting

55. Cindy said the next meeting date, in early September, would be distributed.

ACTION: HA