

**Hillingdon Borough's response to the MPA Domestic & Sexual Violence  
Board 16<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

The following actions were set by the board; I have included the commentary from the relevant points to place those actions in better context

3.5 VB said that she is aware that the evidential support has to be the same for a charge or a caution. This is the point she gets stuck on. VB asked how many repeat cautions were there. Graham Hamilton (GH) said he did not have the exact figure, but noted they do analyse this information periodically. GH informed all that he sampled two months of data of all arrests in October. A similar support for prosecution and those that don't meet the thresholds was found. Approximately fifty percent of all cases were supported. GH noted could the CPS realistically be able to cope with all those cases put forward if no cautions were given?

**3.5 Action:** Hillingdon BOCU to identify whether any repeat cautions had been administered during the reporting period.

There are fourteen reports for that time period, analysis of that data discloses. Seven victims were unwilling to make a statement. Three reports were for the same incident with different sub-classifications. Two reports were a cross allegation. Two reports were different victims.

3.8 AW said of those 6 key factors above, most boroughs are doing some of these; however what is interesting is numbers 5 and 6. These are really good ideas and demonstrate senior leadership. AW noted it is very interesting to see intervention on non-crime book domestics (incidents as opposed to offences) good practice and keeps perpetrators in custody. VB commented on the extra Sergeant that supervises the 124d cases. VB asked how you assess the impact of that extra supervision. JW said this is done by personal relationships and get a sense of how people are responding. GH said that 124D compliance is currently 94% for this financial year – the highest in the MPS.

**3.8 Action:** Hillingdon to produce Critical Success Factors on The reduction of repeat victimisation and Compliance with completion of 124D's.

The six points of repeat victimisation intervention are very much interrelated. Statistically success factors can be measured in terms of

- Low MARAC repeat referrals, 2009 there were 2, 2010 there were 10.
- DV suspects kept in custody 154 in 2010 an average of one every 2.4 days. January 2011 has had 19 suspects charged and kept in custody for

DV offences an average of one every 36 hours. This significantly reduces repeat offending.

- Non Crime Book intervention has resulted in a month by month reduction of reports. Between June 2010 and November 2010 there have been 161 fewer reports than the same period for the previous year; as a result of the early intervention policy and a dedicated sergeant. This sergeant also deals with 124D compliance.
- The 94% statistic alluded to in the meeting was not 124D compliance it actually related to VCOP compliance.

3.11 EH asked about the 'no crime rate' for SCD2 of 27%? PH said that he was surprised at the high rate, and that they have reviewed each case for this. The Crime Management Unit has independently reviewed 'no crime' cases since April 2009. In all cases they are satisfied. PH said that he is aware this is higher than the Hounslow figure, but across the MPS as a whole it is not statistically a great difference. CB noted that Greenwich and Bexley boroughs are high, and she has requested CMU to come in and independently review this. But she said that all boroughs are different, and if there is greater third party reporting then this will affect the results. She said you will see more CRI's but this is not a negative issue as long as no crimes are coming down. No crime is 6% across the MPS; the 27% quoted included No Crime and Crime-related Incidents.

**3.11 Action:** Hillingdon SCD2 to provide the No-Crime and Crime-related Incident data for the reporting period separately.

SCD2 statistics for the reporting period are 21 Crime Related Incidents and 8 No Crime's.

3.13 AW asked if they are so well supported by the borough through core funding and relatively safe, what are you using partnership funding for on DV? JW said part was spent on funding Safeguarding Adults; they are a national pilot for safeguarding issues. They also funded around £4000 for mobile cameras and recording equipment to allow better evidence gathering for disabled victims. VB asked Hillingdon to confirm if this a pilot? JW said yes it did start that way. However the unit is now embedded in the culture of the CSU, and would hope it will become core business. 7.14 SS said she is centrally aware of the work they have done and she is promoting it as good practice. VB said that the Safeguarding Adults unit is an exciting new development, as there is no statutory basis for working with vulnerable adults. VB asked what was coming out of the unit. GH said they were reporting 22% of Safeguarding Adults offences for the MPS and have 56% of the SD rate for the MPS. Usage of mobile equipment has been very useful to gather evidence, as it gives disabled or older victims a voice that is now heard in court. MP noted that two lawyers have been trained on elder abuse and trying to ensure they link in with appropriate cases.

**3.13 Action:** Hillingdon to provide feedback on the Safeguarding Adults pilot.

Hillingdon Borough has two dedicated Safeguarding Adults at Risk (S.A.R.) investigators who work closely with Hillingdon Social Workers from the Safeguarding Adults Team.

S.A.R. investigators are part of the Public Protection Group Command based at West Drayton Police Station. The structure is a Detective Constable and a Police Constable with Advanced /Achieving Best Evidence (A.B.E.) capability. They are overseen by a Detective Sergeant (with other responsibilities) and the unit's Detective Inspector.

They are responsible for Hate /Disability investigations. This format permits a cradle to grave capability for difficult /complex and protracted investigations committed on the most vulnerable by perpetrators usually but not exclusively in positions of trust or family members.

**Some examples of this work**

An 18 year old male who attended a home for adults with severe learning disabilities and behavioural problems, in addition he is autistic and has challenging behaviour. He was assaulted at the home by a senior support worker, who kicked him twice on the leg and threw a cup of coffee over him. He was interviewed by way of an ABE interview but could say no more than he had been kicked. The carer was subsequently arrested and pleaded not guilty at Uxbridge Magistrates Court. Despite the fact the victim was incapable of giving evidence, the carer was convicted.

A 25 year old female who suffers from cerebral palsy, is a wheelchair user and is also epileptic. She requires 24 hour care for her needs, for a number of years she had been physically abused by her mother but this had gone unreported to police. Eventually she confided in a carer that her mother had been punching her in the stomach and trying to strangle her. She was subsequently interviewed by S.A.R officers with the assistance of an intermediary. Her mother was arrested and denied the offence; she pleaded not guilty at court but in a case heard before a District Judge was found guilty.

A case of elder abuse in a residential home, two of the residents disclosed that the carer had hit them round the face, but because of their dementia neither was capable of being interviewed or giving evidence at court. The case was referred to Social Services and following their preliminary investigation the matter was closed. The carer continued to work in post, Police later became aware of the allegation and it the matter was investigated, the carer was subsequently charged with eleven offences. She appeared at Harrow Crown Court and denied the allegations of assault. Despite the fact, none of the victims were able to give

evidence, that there was no supporting medical evidence and difficulties with the witnesses, she was convicted and given a custodial sentence.

### **Practical solutions**

When investigations have progressed to court, often the courts are not equipped to deal with the practicalities of such cases. This has been a particular issue for the team which they have gone to great lengths to overcome.

For example in the second case mentioned above on the day of her mother's trial, the victim was required to give evidence. She wears incontinence pads which needed changing during the day and her specially adapted wheel chair would not fit in the disabled toilet, she also needed a hoist. To resolve this issue, a room was cleared and six people including police officers, her carer and witness support staff lifted her onto the floor, so a carer could change her pad. The alternative was to call a specially adapted bus which could take the victim in her wheelchair to the nearest care home which had suitable facilities. This would have not only delayed the trial and possibly caused the victim more anxiety but involved a cost implication not only in relation to court time but transportation.

A further example is of an elderly gentleman required to give evidence at Harrow Crown Court, against his carer, of financial abuse. The man had a disease which caused the wasting of the small muscles in his hands and feet and could only get around on a motorised scooter. He was required at court for two days and to get there had to pay for an especially adapted taxi which could accommodate the scooter, at a cost of £70 each way. In addition he had to pay £8 per hour for a carer to assist him with his personal needs at court. With the team's help it was eventually agreed that he could claim this money back, this was real issue for a pensioner on a limited income.

Yet another example is that of an 83 year old man who was abused by two successive carers and had property stolen from him. He has no family, is partially sighted and has mobility problems, causing him to use a wheelchair. He was required to give evidence in both trials at Harrow and Isleworth Crown Courts. No consideration had been given as to how he would get to and from court or who would look after his personal needs such as assisting him to the toilet while he was there. This responsibility fell to the officer in the case who was then criticised during the trial by the defence who claimed that the officer's actions were to keep the victim on board.

### **Results**

The teams performance is outstanding the account for now over 60% of all detections for these flagged crimes within the MPS and have been doing so for the last three years.

### **Other work**

The team also give talks and presentations to residents of care homes, care agencies and others such as the Primary Care Trust and Hillingdon Hospital. For example in an effort to raise the level of awareness within more vulnerable and hard to reach groups, they attended a Day Care Centre in Hayes and spoke to a group of twenty elderly people. The presentation was given with the assistance of several interpreters who translated to the audience in their first language of Hindi, Urdu and Gujarati.

They are also involved in a training programme currently being run at Mill House Mental Health Unit in Hillingdon for members of staff from across the borough who works within Mental Health in the community.

The team is trying to take forward these much under reported and often ignored issues. I am of the belief that this work will eventually become full time part of all the MPS CSU's and is at the cutting edge of the MPS providing a service to some of the most vulnerable and ignored victims in London.

The learning and outcomes serve both as deterrents, awareness and learning for all those involved in safeguarding vulnerable adults. Presentations to practitioners, managers and care specialist highlight their responsibility and also an avenue for reporting wrongdoing. A recent case highlighted driven by reported wrongdoing and a potentially impacting case awaits determination and prosecution.

### **Way Forward**

Currently TP are looking at the issue of developing our response to this crime type. DCI Paul Beetham has been liaising with A/Supt. David Ainscough who is scoping the issue on behalf of Commander Rodhouse.

3.15 NKW asked why there was only one child protection trained officer, and noted that Hounslow has 19 out of their 22 officers trained. GH said that CSU's don't get child protection training and there is no specific requirement- SCD5 are present on the borough.

VB voiced her concerns regarding this and asked what would happen if an officer turned up at a house with children- how would they be able to deal with this? GH clarified to the board that child protection training is in the SCU course, and this should be all they need

**3.15 Action:** Hillingdon BOCU to confirm all CSU officers have received Every Child Matters training.

Every CSU officer has received ECM training. As concerns were raised DS Edwards delivered further training as lead of Public Protection Desk to Public Protection. This was completed on 03/02/11.