

Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel

27 July 2023

Commenced: 6.00pm

Terminated: 7.25pm

Present: Councillors N Sharif (Chair), Owen (Deputy), Axford, Beardmore, Bowden, Tilbrook, Warrington

Apologies: Councillors Drennan, B Holland

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted by members of the Scrutiny Panel.

8. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel held on 8 June 2023 were approved as a correct record.

9. DOMESTIC ABUSE

The Panel welcomed Councillor Eleanor Wills, Executive Member (Population Health & Wellbeing); Debbie Watson, Director of Population Health; and Lisa Morris, Strategic Domestic Abuse Manager, to receive an update and overview regarding domestic abuse in Tameside.

The Panel received a summary of activity since Domestic Abuse was last reported to Scrutiny in January 2021. Reference was made to the impacts of Covid, with increases in high risk domestic abuse and capacity within the current system. A strategic needs assessment of domestic abuse has also been undertaken locally, including a review of provision and identification of gaps.

Domestic abuse consists of any of the following, with reference made to children now being viewed and treated as a victim in their own right, where they have been subjected to such abuse within a household.

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological, emotional or other abuse

The requirements of local authorities, set within the new Domestic Abuse Act 2021, was provided and assurances were sought on the Council's current position, developments and overall compliance.

It was reported that domestic abuse continues to be a growing issue in Tameside, with risk levels increasing. Data was provided on domestic abuse incidents reported to Greater Manchester Police from 1019/20 to 2022/23. The number of incidents reported has risen by 23%, from 4,424 in 2019/20 to 5,479 in 2022/23. The data was broken down further to provide members with incident rates by Electoral Ward and in comparison to other Greater Manchester authorities.

Members were updated on the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2026, which is built around 7 focus areas and the governance arrangements in place to deliver and support this. Detail was also provided on the Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment undertaken in 2021 and the Perpetrator Needs Assessment undertaken in 2022. Key learning themes and recommendations from the assessments refer to demand pressures and capacity; support and outcomes for victims; accommodation; quality and consistency of data collection; partnership and workforce development opportunities; and notably the need to address identified gaps in the planning and provision of services for perpetrators of domestic abuse in Tameside.

It was reported that over the next 12 months the Council will be recommissioning Domestic Abuse Support Services, with aims to strengthen existing partnerships, deliver a more tailored offer, with options for targeted work, and to develop a data dashboard to monitor the difference that services are making to outcomes for both victims and perpetrators in Tameside.

Councillor Wills updated members on the Council's White Ribbon accreditation which signifies a local commitment to eradicate violence against women and girls. Detail on this and how to sign up as an ambassador and champion to be shared with all panel members by email outside of the meeting.

Councillor Wills and officers responded to questions on:

- Access to safe and suitable accommodation - challenges in Tameside with regard to refuge units available and the need to accommodate both single females and mothers with children, in particular families with more than 2 children or those with son/male older than 13 years.
- The targeted work needed and ability to increase and assess the impact of provision.
- Addressing gaps identified in the needs assessment, especially around disclosure pathways and work with perpetrators.
- Managing risk, repeat offenders and awareness of the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme – Clare's Law.
- Challenges and barriers associated with evidence and conviction.
- Education, communication and engagement with communities.
- Broader impacts on population health.

Actions: That a working group is established to review domestic abuse services, support and provision in Tameside. The Chair sought the interest of panel members and confirmed that the working group will consist of the Chair, Deputy Chair and Councillors Axford, Beardmore, Bowden, Drennan.

10. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair presented the agreed Scrutiny Annual Work Programmes for 2023/24.

11. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair advised members that a meeting of the Executive with Scrutiny Chairs and the Chair of Overview took place on 22 June 2023, to discuss activity and plans for the year ahead.

The Scrutiny Annual Work Programme report is to be tabled at the next meeting of Overview Panel on 1 August 2023.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the next meeting of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel will take place on Thursday 14 September 2023.

13. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair reported that there were no urgent items for consideration at this meeting.

CHAIR