

Appendix B – Domestic Abuse

1. Background

Domestic abuse involves the misuse of power by one person over another who are or were within a relationship. This abuse is based on a range of control mechanisms which include:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Financial
- Social or economic abuse or neglect of an individual by a partner or ex-partner, carer or one or more family members, in an existing or previous domestic relationship.

This is regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, religious, cultural or political beliefs, ethnicity, disability, health status, class or location. Domestic abuse can also include forced marriage and so-called ‘honour crimes’.

Domestic abuse can include, but is not limited to the items below, although the core areas have been mentioned above:

- Coercive control (a pattern of intimidation, degradation, isolation and control with the use or threat of physical or sexual violence)
- Psychological and/or emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial abuse
- Forced marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Honour-based violence
- Harassment
- Stalking
- Online or digital abuse

2. Objectives of the scheme

The primary objective of the commissioned Domestic Abuse service is to reduce the level of risk in victims (male or female) classed as “High” or “medium risk with further professional judgement” to lower levels. This reduction of risk is via short term, intensive support and advocacy which focuses managing the risks.

The main areas of work during this intensive support is to ensure the safety of the victims and their family, presenting the victims views and concerns at a Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) meeting and supporting any legal interventions and attendance at the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts (SDVC).

3. What support is available?

All victims of domestic abuse are subject to a Safe Lives risk assessment, this contains a set of questions that assist professionals in quantifying the risk associated to each case or victim. If the victim scores a total of 12 or more this is classed as high risk.

Once the risk of the victim has been established as high risk or medium risk with professional judgement, a worker will make contact with the victim within 48 hrs, (although the norm is within 24hrs) to conduct their assessment and start the various activities, which include the following:

1. Legal support, which would include support attending court, the obtaining of a wide range of orders which prevent the perpetrator making contact.
2. The creation of a safety plan for the victim and their family.
3. The request for security enhancements to the victims property.
4. Referral into the MARAC process and by the voice of the victim at these meetings.
5. Co-ordinate any actions with the victim following a MARAC or professionals meeting
6. Assist with housing related matters including private occupation and tenancy matters.
7. Refuge accommodation – ensure if required a victim can access safe accommodation.
8. One to one support either by face to face contact or other agreed methods with the victim.
9. Where a case has links to the MOD, then contact is established with the Army Welfare Services.
10. Referrals and signposting to other support agencies including substance misuse, Rutland food bank, Citizens Advice Bureau – re: benefits, online safety.
11. Ensure that smooth transition during step down between the support worker and Outreach or counselling services.
12. Referrals to the Sexual Assault Referral Centre, if required.

4. How do individuals access the scheme?

To access the services of the provider (United Against Violence & Abuse) - this can be done either by a professional referral with consent, placing a call directly to the dedicated helpline on **0808 80 200 28** (This is a free call that will not show up on any phone records). The Helpline is open from 8am to 8pm - Monday to Saturday.

There is also a text support, so texts can be sent to the following number **07715 994 962**.

There is an online web form within the provider website which can be accessed via the following link - <http://www.uava.org.uk/contact/>

Traditional methods can also be used by writing to the provider at: UAVA Ltd, PO Box 26, Leicester, LE1 1AA

5. How do we prioritise who receives the support?

There is no differential on who receives support, all victims of domestic abuse, who have a “high risk” or “Medium Risk with Professional Judgement” status category are supported.

6. What is the overall budget?

As the contract for services is commissioned by Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (LLR), the total value for this service per year is £824,000, of which Rutland contributes £56,500 per year plus a small amount for the contract monitoring provided by Leicester City Council.

7. Facts & figures

Since the commencement of the commissioned services as an LLR service, the below table shows some of the Rutland volumes for quarters 1 and 2 of 2016/17 for the support worker and Outreach support.

Outputs / Demands 2016/17	Qtr 1	Qtr 2
Helpline Calls	28	45
Assessments completed	46	104
Safety Plans Completed	18	173
Open Cases	18	23
Closed Cases	18	23
Telephone Contacts	274	249
Face to Face meetings with clients	98	102
Multi Agency Meetings	28	20
Court Attendances	18	7
Services users that meet “Changing Lives” Definition	15	7

8. Possible questions / emerging issues

The demand for services within the LLR area is increasing and the contract lead, Leicester City Council are aware of potential pressure of the service.

There is a requirement within Rutland to have an improved service offer that covers those persons under the age of 13 years who have experienced domestic abuse.

Options to address this service aspect are currently being worked upon within Rutland County Council.

It is evident from the work done within this area on housing and through the food bank that there are very direct links to households placed into crisis and poverty. Therefore any work conducted in this area has a direct impact on lifting broken households out of domestic and financial crisis.

The Scrutiny Committee may wish to consider additional work that can be done to support the children from households in domestic violence, especially those which are immediately placed into financial crisis, or the victims and individuals concerned who no longer have access to financial support due to circumstances outside their control.