

Title of Report:	Scrutiny review into the response to domestic abuse in the district
Report to be considered by:	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
Date of Meeting:	30 October 2012

Purpose of Report: To outline the results of the investigation in the activity being undertaken to respond to domestic abuse in the district.

Recommended Action: That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission endorses the recommendations of the Task Group prior to their consideration by the Executive.

Key background documentation: The minutes of and papers provided to the task group (available from Strategic Support).

Task Group Chairman	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Quentin Webb – Tel (01635) 202646
E-mail Address:	qwebb@westberks.gov.uk
Contact Officer Details	
Name:	David Lowe
Job Title:	Scrutiny and Partnerships Manager
Tel. No.:	01635 519817
E-mail Address:	dlowe@westberks.gov.uk

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting of 17 April 2012, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) agreed to conduct a review into domestic abuse in West Berkshire.
- 1.2 This report provides the findings and recommendations arising from the review and provides detail on its Terms of Reference and methodology.

2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1 The Terms of Reference for the task group were to conduct a review into the approach by statutory and other agencies to reported domestic abuse in West Berkshire and in particular:

- The extent or prevalence of domestic abuse in the District;
- The strategic approach taken to preventing, encouraging reporting and responding to domestic abuse;
- The operational practice;
- Consider what might be done further to improve how domestic abuse is dealt with; and
- Report to the OSMC thence the Executive with recommendations as appropriate.

3. Methodology

- 3.1 The review has been conducted by a cross-party task group, working with Council officers and representatives of other organisations. The members of the working group were Councillors George Chandler, Sheila Ellison, Roger Hunneman, Gwen Mason, Quentin Webb and Emma Webster. Councillor Webb was elected as the Chairman.
- 3.2 The task group held the meetings outlined in the table below.

Meeting date	Meeting focus
Friday 20 July 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Election of the Chairman• Agreement of the Terms of Reference• Briefing on<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Definition○ Data○ Previous scrutiny activity• Agreement of the review activity and schedule

Tuesday 11 September 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Strategic Assessment • Governance arrangements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Responsibility, leadership and co-ordination ○ Domestic Abuse Forum ○ Strategy and policy • Operational delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Refuge ○ Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
Tuesday 18 September 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children's safeguarding ○ Youth Offending Team ○ Schools ○ DASH form
Tuesday 25 September 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ West Berkshire Council staff • Survivor's account
Thursday 11 October 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulation of the recommendations

4. Acknowledgements and thanks

- 4.1 The Chairman and Members of the task group would like to acknowledge and thank all those who supported and gave evidence to the review.

5. Findings

Background and context

- (1) Domestic abuse encompasses more than violence. The Government has issued guidance that from April 2013 it will define domestic abuse as:

“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.”

This definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

- (2) The underlying motivation for domestic abuse is for the exertion and maintenance of power and control over others. As an example, the introduction of outside professionals when a woman becomes pregnant can frequently be a trigger for abusive behaviour as would-be abusers feel a resultant loss of control and power.
- (3) Victims of domestic abuse rarely report or seek help at their first experience of it. Research indicates that continued exposure to domestic abuse is required before victims come forward and they will experience on average 30 incidents of abuse before seeking help. Some however never address it and others leave abusive relationships without the involvement or engagement of any response or support agency. Due to its hidden nature and its consequent underreporting, understanding its prevalence and how to take action to address it is difficult.
- (4) Domestic abuse is often a hidden crime, which affects all sections of society. 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men will experience some form of domestic abuse in their lifetime. 80% of perpetrators are male and 20% female.
- (5) Some victims fail to recognise that they are in abusive relationships, seeing them, sometimes over time, as normal or to be expected.
- (6) Domestic abuse can result in severe physical injury, emotional trauma and, potentially, murder. National statistics are that:
 - On average two women a week are killed by their partner or former partner.
 - One in ten women may be affected by domestic abuse at any one time.
 - 45% of women and 26% of men are likely to have experienced at least one incident of interpersonal violence in their lifetime.
 - 70% of repeat visits to Accident and Emergency are associated with domestic abuse and 50% of female users of mental health services have experienced domestic abuse.

In the Thames Valley:

- Domestic abuse has accounted for 31.4% (27 out of 86) of adult homicides over the last five years
 - 32,404 incidents of domestic abuse were reported to Thames Valley Police in 2010/11.
 - It is estimated that 72,331 women between the ages of 16 and 59 will have been affected by domestic abuse last year in the Thames Valley
- (7) Children often experience long term effects from witnessing and experiencing incidents of domestic abuse. Children witnessing domestic

abuse are more likely of becoming abusers themselves than those who are not.

- (8) As well as the emotional cost of domestic abuse, there is a huge financial burden to both individuals and services. Domestic abuse is estimated to cost Britain £23 billion a year. Application of a University of Leeds modelling tool indicates that in addition to the impact on people, the total annual financial cost to West Berkshire is £18,184,000, broken down as follows:
- Service Costs £9,762,900
 - Criminal Justice £3,191,500
 - Healthcare physical £3,828,600
 - Mental health £552,300
 - Social Services £715,500
 - Housing & refugees £495,800
 - Civil Legal costs £979,100
 - Employment £8,385,200

Governance, organisation and strategy

- (9) Frontline support to the victims of domestic abuse remains a continuing priority for the government.
- (10) Strategic action on domestic abuse is co-ordinated through the Safer Communities Partnership (SCP). The SCP brings together agencies such as Thames Valley Police, the police authority (until November 2012, at which point it will be replaced by the Police and Crime Commissioner), West Berkshire Council, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, health organisations, the Probation Service and housing associations. West Berkshire Council employs an officer as a Domestic Abuse Reduction Co-ordinator to ensure that the work of agencies is joined up.
- (11) The SCP delegates managerial responsibility for domestic abuse to the West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Forum (WBDAF), which brings together operational managers and practitioners from around 20 organisations. The Forum aims to co-ordinate and improve support services for those affected by domestic violence and abuse, including victims, survivors and their children. Close links are maintained with bodies that are not primarily established to address domestic abuse, such as the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Children and Young People's Partnership, and are not represented on the Forum.
- (12) Although the Council's Education Service is represented on the WBDAF, individual schools are not (whether they are under control of the Local Education Authority or academies), nor are General Practitioners.
- (13) The WBDAF addresses the processes around the management of domestic abuse cases but not the actual cases themselves. Case management is addressed through the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), for cases that are high risk, or the Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART), for cases that are medium or low risk.

- (14) The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is a meeting where information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases in a local area. High risk domestic abuse cases are those where a victim is considered to be at risk of serious harm or death from their partner, ex-partner or family member. At the MARAC meeting there are representatives from local police, health services, child protection, housing, a specialist domestic violence support service and other local agencies. After sharing all relevant information they have about a victim, the representatives discuss options for increasing the safety of the victim and turn these into a co-ordinated action plan. The main focus of the MARAC is on managing the risk to the adult victim but in doing this it will also consider other family members including any children involved and managing the behaviour of the abuser. At the heart of a MARAC is the working assumption that no single agency or individual can see the complete picture of the life of a victim, but all may have insights that are crucial to their safety. The victim does not attend the meeting but is represented by the specialist domestic abuse support advocate who speaks on their behalf.
- (15) The MARAC process is very well regarded by contributing agencies and provides an effective tool for the management of high risk cases.
- (16) Berkshire benefits from a Thames Valley Police Domestic Violence Unit (DVU), staffed by officers who have undertaken detective training. All high risk cases are managed by the unit.
- (17) The Council has created, for a one year trial period, the Domestic Abuse Response Team (the DART) to deal specifically with medium and low risk referrals. Since its establishment in October 2011, to September 2012 the DART had received 340 referrals, each of which had been in receipt of an intervention. An evaluation of the DART's effectiveness is due to report after its first year of operation but already OFSTED has recognised its worth, praising the service, and indications are that those working with it, including families, are convinced of its utility. Performance data also indicate that the number of repeat offences is reducing.
- (18) The DART in West Berkshire Council is, if not unique, one of only very few teams working expressly on domestic abuse and consequently a number of other local authorities are interested in its work. Despite this, managers and staff remain focussed on case management and not promotion of the DART's worth to the wider local government community.
- (19) The DART appears to be appropriately resourced, acknowledging that, if given more, managers would be able to do more. The scheduled evaluation will however assess if resource levels are adequate.
- (20) An Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) is employed through the district's refuge provider (A2Dominion). IDVAs are trained specialists who provide a service to victims who are at high risk of harm from intimate partners, ex-partners or family members, with the aim of securing their safety and the safety of their children. Serving as a victim's primary point of contact, IDVAs normally work with their clients from the point of crisis, to assess the level of risk, discuss the range of suitable options and develop safety plans. They are pro-active in implementing the plans, which address

immediate safety, including practical steps to enable victims to protect themselves and their children, as well as longer-term solutions. IDVAs will represent their clients at the MARAC and help implement safety plans which will include actions from the MARAC as well as sanctions and remedies available through the criminal and civil courts, housing options and services available through other organisations. IDVAs support and work over the short- to medium-term to put victims on the path to long-term safety.

- (21) Evidence directly and indirectly from survivors is that the work of the IDVA is effective and the support provided valued highly.
- (22) The post of IDVA is currently funded directly from the Home Office but this arrangement will cease with the introduction of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) on 22 November 2012, to whom the budget will be transferred and ring-fencing removed from April 2013. A risk exists that the incoming PCC may decide to cease the funding of IDVAs or take steps to amalgamate them across local authority and local police areas or even at force level.
- (23) Analysis conducted by the national charity Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) indicates that for the workload generated in the district, there should be 2.5 FTE IDVAs, rather than the 0.8 FTE currently engaged.
- (24) The key strategic document through which domestic abuse is addressed is the SCP's Strategic Assessment/Partnership Plan. This has the express aim of achieving a reduction in the number of repeat incidents of domestic abuse reported to the police. There are a number of appropriate measures, targets and actions in place and being undertaken to achieve this. A discrete strategy, to the delivery of which all contributing organisations could commit, would however have the advantage of raising and maintaining the profile of domestic abuse.
- (25) Domestic abuse is one of three priorities for the Local Safeguarding Children's Board in its Business Plan to 2014. Although it contains a number of domestic abuse actions, for example training, the extent to which they are being achieved is not clear.

Operation and practice

- (26) As the number of agencies involved in addressing domestic abuse is significant, it is not easy to quantify the overall expenditure on directly targeted resources and activities.
- (27) There are a number of local initiatives working to address the causes and effects of domestic abuse. These include the Starting Over Group, for children aged 5 – 11, and Break for Change, which addresses young people's abuse of parents. These schemes appear to be working well but the effectiveness of the programme to address the behaviour of adult perpetrators, 'Making Changes', has not been assessed.

Police

- (28) Police officers attending incidents in which domestic abuse has occurred or is suspected complete, along with the victim, a form specifically designed to capture key detail (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence or 'DASH'). Completed forms for high risk cases are passed to the DVU, those for medium and low risk to the DART. Data indicate that, on average, six forms are completed each day in West Berkshire.
- (29) The quality of the information recorded in the DASH form currently in use in West Berkshire and the consequent value of it is not always of the standard required by receiving agencies. To address this recognised weakness, trials of a new form – the Incident DASH or I-DASH – are being undertaken in other parts of the Thames Valley Police area.
- (31) Domestic abuse is the largest cause for the initiation of Child Protection Plans in West Berkshire. This reflects the national picture. Children's Services receives 25 – 30 referrals from the police each week in which domestic abuse is the main or a contributory factor.
- (32) The Domestic Violence Unit has seen improvements in its conviction rates but is facing challenges associated with its wide geographical coverage. Logistical problems have recently been created by the closure of the Newbury Family Court, with the requirement now for cases to be heard in Reading or, even more problematically, Maidenhead or Slough.
- (33) Money spent on publicity to encourage the reporting of domestic abuse appears to have been effective but as reporting rates increase, there is a risk that there may be insufficient resources to meet the demand for support to victims and perpetrators.

Health

- (34) Although the contribution of the Specialist Practitioner Domestic Abuse is acknowledged, taken in the round, local health services do not appear to give a high priority to domestic abuse. In part this may be due to the breadth of services encompassed within the whole. Whilst not necessarily appropriate for all health services, GPs, health visitors and staff working in ante-natal, maternity and accident and emergency units clearly have the potential to be exposed to the victims and effects of domestic abuse and should be expected to be able to take appropriate action.
- (35) Recommendation 11 of the Pemberton Domestic Homicide Review states:
 - PCTs through their contractual arrangements with GPs [are] to recognise the important role of GPs in relations to victims of domestic abuse and their families and that appropriate training, guidance and support is provided by commissioners and professional bodies, to include identifying the risk indicators associated with perpetrator behaviour.

The desired outcome from this recommendation is that

GPs feel empowered and confident to identify, encourage, report and signpost disclosures of domestic abuse. Patients feel able to confide in their GP.

Although the Safer Communities Partnership has received a report that all the required actions for compliance with the recommendation have been achieved, the evidence to the task group, uniformly across the witnesses that were able to express a view, indicates that if this the case then they have not achieved the desired outcome.

Refuge

- (36) There is no statutory requirement for the provision of a refuge and the numbers of victims from West Berkshire seeking refuge is not known.
- (37) West Berkshire Council provides £81k per annum to the housing association A2Dominion for services to support women victims of domestic abuse. This funding augments that received from the Home Office for the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA), and also provides a refuge service of 4 fixed units (single beds) and 30, two-hour packages of support per week. The refuge operating model was introduced in April 2012, prior to which 12 fixed units were available. Although the change was made for financial reasons, housing officers believe that the current arrangements will be more effective, working to keep families together in their homes and maintain daily routines (such as schooling for children) rather than placing mothers into a refuge. An assessment of the effectiveness of the service has not yet been carried out, although is intended. Data from A2Dominion are insufficiently complete to indicate whether provision is adequate.
- (38) There is a perception amongst some professionals outside of the Housing Service that the reduced refuge provision is inadequate. An absence of hard data makes objective assessment difficult and 'feelings' rather than knowledge based on facts dominate the debate.
- (39) If possible, victims seeking refuge who contact A2Dominion directly remain within West Berkshire, although the absence of family units sometimes necessitates the location of women with children elsewhere. Conversely, it is the practise of Housing officers to seek accommodation, where it is necessary to do so, outside of the district. Whilst it is not necessarily wrong for these separate entities to have different operating procedures, it does make the tracking of the overall numbers seeking refuge more difficult.
- (40) Although refuge is available for individuals and families for up to two years, victims of domestic abuse are fast tracked through other processes, such as homelessness and threshold loans, in order to minimise the time during which temporary or transitory arrangements are necessary.
- (41) Whilst only single accommodation units are available locally, the national network of refuges allows victims of domestic abuse with families to be placed together. The reciprocal nature of the national system has meant that in the past more people from outside the district have been placed in the West Berkshire refuge than its residents that have been placed elsewhere. If

present, boys over the age of 14 are housed separately to the rest of the family unit.

- (42) The provision of only single units in the West Berkshire refuge presents a risk that expectant mothers being accommodated would have to be relocated outside the district once their child is born, with the resultant loss of support networks. Whilst the impact of this risk would be high, there are insufficient data to indicate its likelihood or existing prevalence.
- (43) There is support for the view that the general perception of refuges and those who have need of them are in some ways undesirable. This view is not substantiated by those with direct experience.

Education and schools

- (44) Safeguarding audits carried out in schools now include assessment of factors relating to domestic abuse. It is expected that this will lead to a demand for more training and awareness on the topic for teachers and other staff.
- (45) There is a perception that whilst teachers may know which of their pupils are exposed to domestic abuse, they and others in schools lack the confidence, the time and perhaps the will to take action. To address this, schools will require support and resources.
- (46) Although schools in West Berkshire do not experience significant amounts of disruptive behaviour from pupils, of those excluded from school and whose behaviour is sufficiently challenging for them to be referred to specialist schools outside the district, rather than to the Pupil Referral Units, up to 90% have experienced domestic abuse. The average cost of dealing with these children – of which there are currently around 20 – is approximately £36k each, per annum.
- (47) Due to limited staffing resources, domestic abuse has not historically been a priority for the Council's educational psychologists when addressing disruptive behaviour in pupils. If further resources were to be made available within the Council, domestic abuse could receive greater attention. Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs), now in place in all the district's schools, could act as local champions and take forward action on domestic abuse.
- (48) As the police are unsure of the extent to which it can be managed and acted upon, information on domestic abuse incidents collected by them is not shared with schools. Evaluation of the trial of the revised I-DASH form and process may highlight how this can be done.

Youth Offending Team

- (49) The work of the Youth Offending Team recognises the contribution that exposure to domestic abuse plays in the lives of young offenders. Those who have witnessed domestic abuse in their homes are very likely to abuse both their own partners and, increasingly, their parents, who are in turn very reluctant to seek help. The decision to formally recognise the importance of domestic abuse was made despite it not forming part of external inspection

regimes. This is an example of astute management action in response to analysis of local factors.

- (50) Early intervention for young offenders engaged in domestic abuse is seen by professionals as being key in modifying behaviour. The benefits for children and wider society, including financial, are recognised nationally in the (then) Department for Children and Families report 'Early Intervention: Securing good outcomes for all children and young people'.

Training

- (51) Although all police officers receive training on domestic abuse, there is a lack of consistency across other agencies in the provision of training that would enable their members of staff to recognise domestic abuse when they see it and to understand what to do about it. As domestic abuse is sometimes peripheral to their primary activity, funding for training in some agencies is frequently difficult to secure. In the current financial climate this is likely to remain the case.

- (52) It is recognised that as it has relied on only the Safer Communities Partnership's Domestic Abuse Reduction Co-ordinator for its delivery, the existing delivery model for training to the agencies dealing with domestic abuse has had limited success. A new system providing different levels of training for specific groups within organisations has been approved by the Safer Communities Partnership and is intended to be brought in to operation. The tiers of the training are:

- Tier 1
 - Basic awareness training for all staff
 - Delivered by e-learning package
 - Available to all partner organisations
 - Mandatory for all employees (with exceptions where previous accredited learning can be demonstrated)

- Tier 2
 - Enhanced e-learning package for specific employees
 - Detailed guidance for employees
 - Bespoke classroom based training for key staff

- Tier 3
 - Development and co-ordination of a Champions Scheme
 - Champions to provide support and training to peers

Responsibility for delivery of the training will rest with individual organisations, although resources will be shared between them. Neither a timetable for delivery nor funding have been identified.

- (53) A face to face training package developed by the YOT appeared to be very well constructed, providing specific, scenario-based guidance for practitioners working with victims and perpetrators.

- (54) Take up of domestic abuse training recently offered to voluntary organisations by the LSCB has been disappointingly low.
- (55) Staff working across all agencies in roles for which domestic abuse is not necessarily the primary focus are not always confident in dealing with it. Practical training that is tailored to the need of specific staff and that focuses on procedures, information and guidance would help address this.
- (56) School staff do not receive training expressly on dealing with domestic abuse, although aspects of it are covered during training delivered for safeguarding.
- (57) There is some recognition amongst GPs that their awareness and training could be improved. The national Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) project appears to offer GP practices the support that they require. Financial modelling indicates that having covered operating costs, introduction of the scheme allows c£3,100 per practice, per annum to be redirected away from domestic abuse and towards other demands.
- (58) The provision of training on domestic abuse for all Council staff, despite endorsement at the highest levels, has been problematic. This has primarily been due to a reduction in funding for training as priorities have been reassessed in the continuing financial climate. A 20-minute e-learning package is however shortly due to be made available and its completion will be mandated, and a policy with advice for managers exists. There is currently no advice provided for Council staff who suspect that one of their colleagues may be being subjected to domestic abuse.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 Overall the district appears to be dealing with domestic abuse well and specifically:
- The incidence and prevalence of domestic abuse in West Berkshire appears to be no better or worse than in other places;
 - Domestic abuse has a high profile amongst the responsible agencies and an effective governance structure is in place, ensuring that the issue is being handled in an appropriately strategic manner, with contributions from most of the organisations that should be making them;
 - The operational application of the strategy, through well established and effective co-operation between a number of organisations, has led to the positive outcomes of increased incidence of reporting and reduced incidence of repeat offences.
- 6.2 To build on the general trend of improvement, there are however a number of additional, specific actions that can and should be taken to move forward further the effectiveness of the work in this area. These are set out in section 7, below.

7. Recommendations

7.1 The following recommendations are proposed:

- (1) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Safer Communities should take steps to secure the attendance at the West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Forum representatives from schools and General Practitioners, to ensure that all appropriate agencies are represented.
- (2) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Children and Young People should secure the necessary funding to make permanent the Domestic Abuse Response Team in order to ensure that its effective work continues.
- (3) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Children and Young People should consider increasing the resources available to the Domestic Abuse Response Team in order to improve its resilience.
- (4) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Safer Communities should take steps to ensure that the incoming Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) fully understands the value of the West Berkshire Independent Domestic Violence Adviser. The desired outcome would be for funding, which will move from the Home Office to the PCC's control, to be maintained at existing levels.
- (5) In the event that the desired outcome at recommendation (4) cannot be achieved, the Portfolio Holder responsible for Housing should make available funding for the post of Independent Domestic Violence Adviser in order that its valuable work continues.
- (6) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Housing should make available funding to reduce the gap for Independent Domestic Violence Advisers in the district from the current 0.8 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to the 2.5 FTE recommended by the charity Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA).
- (7) In order to raise and maintain the profile of domestic abuse, the Portfolio Holder responsible for Safer Communities should publish a domestic abuse strategy, for which appropriate governance and delivery mechanisms should be established.
- (8) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Safer Communities should review the 'Making Changes' programme to ensure that it is effective and fit for purpose.
- (9) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Safer Communities should seek from HM Court and Tribunal Service that the Special Domestic Violence Court be reinstated in Newbury, in order to ensure that victims from West Berkshire receive justice expediently.
- (10) Following the success of previous campaigns, the Portfolio Holder responsible for Safer Communities should develop and deliver a media and communications plan to maintain or improve the level at which domestic abuse is reported.

- (11) The Chief Executive of the Royal Berkshire Hospital should develop, deliver and review the effectiveness of packages of training and support for all staff working in maternity, post-natal and accident and emergency units to ensure that they have the requisite skills and confidence to be able to identify, record and deal effectively with domestic abuse.
- (12) The Chief Executive of the Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust should provide assurance to the Safer Communities Partnership that funding for the post of Specialist Practitioner Domestic Abuse remains a priority, in order that her important and valued work continues.
- (13) The Chairman of the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board should critically examine the appropriateness and effect of the action taken in response to Recommendation 11 of the Pemberton Domestic Homicide Review, in order to ensure that its desired outcome is achieved.
- (14) The Portfolio Holder for Housing should write to the Home Secretary requesting that she give consideration to the establishment of a national system for refuge provision, in order to ensure that there is an appropriate number and mix of accommodation type available.
- (15) In order that professionals working with domestic abuse are able to understand the composite picture and manage resources accordingly, in conjunction with A2Dominion the Portfolio Holder for Housing should establish a mechanism to capture data on the total number of referrals being made to refuges, whether within the district or elsewhere. After six months of data collection, an assessment should be made as to the appropriateness of both the number and type of refuge accommodate provided.
- (16) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Housing should develop and deliver a media and communications plan to counter negative perceptions of refuges held by the public, in order that those perceptions do not prevent, dissuade or otherwise deflect female victims of domestic abuse from seeking help from them when they need it.
- (17) In order that all professionals with a need to know, do know, the Local Police Area Commander should take the necessary steps to ensure that data captured on the I-DASH can be shared with schools.
- (18) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Children and Young People should ensure that there is no further reduction in the staffing of the West Berkshire YOT, in order to enable it to continue its valued work on Domestic Abuse.
- (19) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Education should take steps to train Emotional Literacy Support Assistants as 'domestic abuse champions' in schools, in order to support all other school staff in dealing with domestic abuse.
- (20) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Education should take steps to make training in domestic abuse mandatory for all schools' staff, in order to ensure that they have the requisite skills and confidence to be able to identify, record and deal effectively with the effects in children of domestic abuse.

- (21) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Safer Communities should ensure that a timetable is developed and that appropriate resources are made available in order to ensure that the domestic abuse tiered training system is delivered by no later than April 2013.
- (22) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Children and Young People should, through the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, consider re-running domestic abuse awareness and other training for voluntary organisations, in order to ensure that they have an appropriate level of understanding. The West Berkshire Volunteer Centre may be able to provide assistance in the promotion of the courses.
- (23) The Chairman of the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board should commission the Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) scheme for adoption by the West Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Group, in order to improve the awareness of and responsiveness to domestic abuse by GP practices.
- (24) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Corporate Services should ensure that mandatory training for all Council staff on domestic abuse is introduced, in order to ensure that awareness levels are increased.
- (25) The Portfolio Holder responsible for Corporate Services should produce domestic abuse guidance for all Council staff, irrespective of status, in order that all are aware of the actions that might be taken in the event of another member of staff disclosing to them that they are experiencing domestic abuse.

Appendices

Appendix A – Glossary of Terms

Glossary

A2Dominion	West Berkshire's refuge provider
CAADA	Co ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse
DART	Domestic Abuse Response Team
DASH form	Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence Form
DVU	Domestic Violence Unit
ELSA	Emotional Literacy Support Assistants
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
'Honour' based violence	a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community'.
I DASH form	Incident, Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence Form
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advisor
IRIS	Identification and Referral to Improve Safety of women experiencing domestic violence project
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PCT	Primary Care Trust
SCP	Safer Communities Partnership
WBDAF	West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Forum
YOT	Youth Offending Team