



Children, Young People and Families Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment

September 2015

Shona Harris

People Directorate

London Borough of Sutton

Contents

1. Executive Summary	3
1.1 Factors influencing prevalence of domestic violence and abuse	3
1.2 Domestic violence and abuse rates	3
1.3 Children and domestic violence and abuse	3
1.4 Domestic violence and abuse services in the London Borough of Sutton	4
2. Recommendations	5
3. Introduction	8
4. Policy Context.....	8
4.1 National context	8
4.2 Local Context	11
5. Factors influencing domestic violence and abuse prevalence	12
5.1 Demographic factors	12
5.2 Individual factors	13
5.3 Household type factors	15
6. Domestic Violence and Abuse Prevalence	17
6.1 Children and young people domestic violence and abuse rates	18
7. Domestic Violence Services in London Borough of Sutton	21
7.1 No clear pathway for children, young people and families accessing services	21
7.2 Limited specialist domestic violence and abuse services available for children, young people and families	22
7.3 Unknown spend on services	24
7.4 Limited support for adult perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse	25
7.5 There is no IDVA (or equivalent) support for children and young people	25
8. Summary	27
9. Appendices	29

1. Executive Summary

The aim of this needs assessment is to identify the levels of which children and young people in the borough may be a witness to, victim of and the perpetrator of domestic violence and abuse (DVA). Through this, the needs assessment will explore whether the services that are being provided in the borough are able to meet the needs of these children, young people and their families.

This needs assessment was requested by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. This was following the presentation of the Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment to the board in June 2015, in recognition that further work was required to understand the impact of domestic violence on children, young people and families.

The needs assessment has maintained a focus on the services provided and commissioned by the Council. The services that are provided by local voluntary and charity organisations, through external funding (funding sourced from places other than the council) are mentioned but there is no detailed exploration of these services.

1.1 Factors influencing prevalence of domestic violence and abuse

The National Crime Survey for England and Wales has shown that domestic violence and abuse prevalence is highest in the under 24 year olds, those that are separated, the unemployed, single parent households and those with a disability / illness. In all of these cases, the rates are significantly higher in women (see page 9-10 for further details).

Children and young people that grow up in households where the parent(s) suffer from one or all of domestic violence, substance misuse and mental health issues, have been identified at being a higher risk of harm.

1.2 Domestic violence and abuse rates

In the 12 month averages up to August 2015 there have been 1,375 domestic crimes, which is a 26% increase in the 12 months up to August 2014. This mirrors the increase in Kingston (45%), Richmond-Upon-Thames (34%) and Merton (26%).

1.3 Children and domestic violence and abuse

Leading charities have voiced concerns that children are often seen as passive in domestic violence situations, leading to there being limited information and recorded detail on the number of children impacted by domestic violence. Research has shown that the children that witness domestic violence are more likely to:

- Be at increased risk of becoming victims of abuse themselves
- Be at significant risk to their physical, emotional and social development
- Are more likely to continue the cycle of violence (whereby they become involved in relationships with domestic violence)

Nationally produced research has shown that around one in five children have been exposed to domestic violence, with a third of children witnessing also experiencing another form of abuse. The NSPCC estimate that one in five teenagers have been physically abused by their boyfriends or girlfriends.

Understanding the rates of children experiencing domestic violence and abuse in Sutton, has been through analysis of Child Protection Plans (CPPs), MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference) data and Families Matters (Troubled Families) data. This data has shown that there are a number of children that have been impacted by what they have witnessed. In the August 2015 CPP caseload 64% of children with a CPP included or had a history of domestic violence and abuse. The data has also shown there are a small number of cases where children have been identified as the perpetrator or have experienced domestic violence and abuse in their own relationships.

1.4 Domestic violence and abuse services in the London Borough of Sutton

To identify if children, young people and families had access to the services required, a service mapping exercise has been carried out. This exercise identified the following:

- There is no clear and consistent referral pathway for children, young people and families accessing services
 - There are a limited number of domestic violence and abuse specialist services for children, young people and families
 - There is an unknown spend on specialist children's domestic violence and abuse services
 - There is limited support for perpetrators
 - No specialist IDVA support available for children and young people.
-

2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this needs assessment, it is recommended that Sutton Council note the issues identified and agree the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1 - Strengthen multi-agency working to improve outcomes for children, young people and families

This needs assessment has focussed mainly on the services provided by Sutton Council, however there are a number of other organisations that are providing support to those experiencing and perpetrating domestic violence and abuse in the borough, such as Police, Sutton Clinical Commissioning Group and local charities and voluntary organisations (Women's Aid). NICE domestic violence and abuse guidance recommend that local authorities work with a multi-agency approach to reduce the prevalence of this issue. Following this guidance, it is recommended Sutton Council should:

- work with the partners and providers, to identify the full range of services delivered in the borough, and identify the role they play in meeting the needs of the children, young people and families that have experienced domestic violence and abuse
- ensure effective sharing of information between providers and within the Council. For example ensure where children are known to MARAC they are also investigated by Children's Social Services (and vice versa)

Recommendation 2 - Develop an integrated domestic violence and abuse referral pathway for Children

Guidance from NICE recommends that Health and Social Care Commissioners should ensure there are integrated care pathways for identifying, referring and providing interventions to support people who experience domestic violence and abuse, and to manage the perpetrators. The mapping of services in Sutton has shown, and evidenced in the support services listed in the Child Protection Plans, there does not appear to be a clear pathway for children accessing the services. It is recommended Sutton Council:

- develops a clear and integrated domestic violence referral and service pathway for domestic violence services for children, that supports, complements and is integrated with the pathway for adults
- ensures the services for perpetrators are available and are provided through the pathway, to reduce the need for on-spot purchases. The services should compliment and be integrated with the services commissioned for those that experience domestic violence.

- ensures the referral pathway is developed through a multi-agency approach (e.g. health care providers, social workers, Police, etc)
- fully evaluates the services being provided now, through qualitative and quantitative methods, to identify the individual services and interventions that make a difference and lasting impact on children, young people and families

Recommendation 3 - Develop a budget for domestic violence and abuse across the Council and its partners

The mapping of services has shown that there is no clear understanding of the current spend on domestic violence services across the Council and its partners. This makes it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of individual services and interventions on addressing the impacts of domestic violence. As Sutton Council is having to make savings, it is important for the Council and its partners to be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the services commissioned, to ensure that there are dedicated services available. It is recommended:

- through the development of an integrated referral and service pathway for domestic violence services, that Sutton Children's Trust Board, together with the Safer Sutton Partnership Board, explores the option for a single domestic violence and abuse budget across the partnership.
- conduct further benchmarking research to identify spend on domestic violence services by other local authorities.

Recommendation 4 - Provide children and young people with specialist domestic violence and abuse services

The mapping of services in the borough has shown that there are no dedicated domestic violence and abuse services for children, young people and families. There is however a range of services available to support the symptoms, such as, CAMHS, ELSA, Taming the Temper Dragon and Jas-U-Turn. Like adults, it is important for children and young people to have access to immediate and long-term support. Based on the guidance from NICE and these findings, it is recommended Sutton Council:

- collaboratively, in a multi-agency approach, commissions a dedicated resource for children, young people and families experiencing domestic violence and abuse
- provides services to help improve the wellbeing and self-esteem of the child / young person through providing an intervention to match the development stage and gender of the child

Recommendation 5 - Identify the possibility of expanding IDVA support to work with children, young people and families

Within Sutton there are a number of different IDVA staff commissioned by different providers to work with adults. As these staff are an invaluable resource and provide a much needed service, there could be the potential for expanding the service to provide immediate and long-term support for children and young people. It is recommended:

- IDVA staff are aware of the referral pathway and services available in Sutton
- further exploration is undertaken to further develop the concept of a child IDVA Officer, that works with and alongside the other IDVA staff operating in the borough.

Recommendation 6 - Using a multi-agency group, develop an action plan to ensure the voices of children, young people and families are heard

The needs assessment has identified a number of areas of improvement to improve outcomes for children, young people and families that have experienced domestic violence. Based on these findings, it is recommend Sutton Council:

- Develops a multi-agency delivery group to develop an action plan
- Strengthens the governance of domestic violence and abuse to ensure the voices of children, young people and families that have experienced domestic violence and abuse are heard and acted upon.

3. Introduction

The aim of this needs assessment is to identify the levels of which children in the borough may be a witness to, victim of and the perpetrator of domestic violence. This will involve understanding the groups that are at greatest risk and the impact of domestic violence on children. Through this, the needs assessment will explore whether the services that are being provided in the borough are able to meet the needs of these children and their families.

This needs assessment was requested by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, in recognition that further work was required to understand the impact of domestic violence on children, young people and families. This was following the presentation of the Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment at the board in June 2015

The needs assessment had maintained a focus on the services provided and commissioned by the Council. The services that are provided by local Voluntary and Charity organisations, through external funding (funding sourced from places other than the council) are mentioned but there is no detailed exploration of these services.

4. Policy Context

4.1 National context

Legislation and policy related to domestic violence has changed dramatically over the years, with there being limited legislation aimed at addressing domestic violence prior to 1976. The Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act in 1976 gave survivors new rights, by offering civil protection orders (injunctions) for those at risk of abuse. Since then, there has been a series of legislative changes and changes in service provision, such as the development of refuges (in 1971) and, the most recent law aimed to combat domestic violence and abuse, 'Clare's Law', which gives people the right to ask Police about a partner's history of domestic violence.

Looking specifically at children and young people and domestic violence and abuse, there have been a number of specific changes in legislation and policy. For example, in March 2013 the definition of domestic violence was updated to include all people over the age of 16 years (as was previously 18 years):

“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 and emotional.”

This addition goes some way to recognise that young people can be involved in relationships that involve domestic violence and abuse. It also allows services to work and support these young people, who under the previous definition, may not have been eligible for support.

As well as updating the definition, in 2010 the government launched a paper that called for the end to violence to women and girls. The vision of this paper was to:

- Prevent violence from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it
- Provide adequate support where violence does occur
- Work in partnership to obtain the best outcome for victims and their families
- Take action to reduce the risk to women and girls who are victims of these crimes and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice

To achieve this vision, a number of actions have been carried out. The following is a summary of the key actions:

- Re-launched 'This is Abuse' campaign, with a focus on reaching young male perpetrators
- Completion of the domestic violence disclosure scheme national roll-out from March 2014
- National roll-out of the Domestic Violence Protection Order which prevents perpetrators of violence from returning to their home for up to 28 days, giving the victim time to consider their options.

Many of these actions will go some way to help protect children and young people from being the victim of and witnessing domestic violence.

'This is Abuse' Campaign

The 'This is Abuse' Campaign was originally launched in February 2010 as a result of research, including that by NSPCC, that identified, that young people were confused about what constituted as controlling and abusive relationships and consent in a relationship. These findings raised concerns that young people could be experiencing these issues and interpreting them as normal behaviours in relationships.

In response to these findings, the Home Office decided to launch a series of campaigns that aimed to prevent teenagers from becoming victims and perpetrators of domestic violence - 'Teenage rape prevention' and 'Teenager relationship abuse'. After further research identified that teenagers did not see abuse and rape as separate entities, the campaigns were brought together,

under the banner of 'This is Abuse' campaign in December 2013.

The overarching aim of the 'This is Abuse' campaign was to:

“Prevent teenagers from becoming victims and perpetrators of abusive relationships, including sexual violence. By encouraging teenagers to re-think their views of violence, abuse, controlling behaviours and what consent means within their relationships and direct them to places for help and advice.”

The objectives were:

- Raise awareness of the issue of relationship abuse
- Raise awareness of the issue of rape and sexual violence
- Improve understanding of what constitutes relationship abuse (not just physical it can also be emotional abuse and controlling behaviour as well)
- Improve understanding of what constitutes rape, sexual violence and consent
- Empower teenagers to identify, challenge and report abusive and sexually abusive behaviour and actively seek and recognise consent

The campaign ran from December 2013 to April 2014 and included a series of adverts through a range of different channels (radio, online, TV). There were also partnerships with key Vloggers, MTV, Hollyoaks and KISS FM. This was supported by the distribution of campaign materials to key partners, who worked with the target audience, and a range of PR and media activity. Much of this campaign material signposted young people to a specially launched 'This is Abuse' website. Rather than just providing further signposting, the website had discussion forums that were hosted, moderated and supported by 'Respect' and AVA (Against Violence and Abuse). With reputable and informed organisations leading the discussions, it helped to ensure young people got the right information and advice (at the first point of contact).

Locally run services, including local authorities and their commissioned services, had a key role in this campaign, as they could help to facilitate and promote discussions based around the issues raised in the campaign. To help facilitate this discussion, a discussion guide was available (for free) for any interested partners to use when working with young people on these issues.

After the campaign finished a detailed evaluation was conducted, revealing that the campaign had achieved the following:

- Improved awareness of issues relating to sexual abuse, violence and rape
- Those who recognised the campaign were more like to take action against the abusive

- behaviours
- Forced teenagers to question their definition of rape and the need for consent

(Source: This is Abuse Campaign, Summary Report)

4.2 Local Context

In 2015 Sutton Council and Metropolitan Police published a joint Sutton Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment. This assessment revealed that from 2004/5 to 2014/15 the total level of crime was down 37.4% and so was violence against the person, by 27.9%. However, although levels of crime are decreasing, domestic violence and abuse made up approximately a third of all violence against a person in Sutton on an annual basis and the domestic violence victimisation rates per thousand adults are higher in Sutton than all other boroughs in south west London, except for Croydon.

The assessment also revealed that domestic violence was a considerable contributing factor within local Child Protection issues. As result, it was decided at the Local Safeguarding Childrens Board (LCSB), in June 2015, that a full needs assessment into children, young people and families domestic violence and abuse should be conducted to fully understand the impact.

Further to a detailed children, young people and families domestic violence and abuse needs assessment, Sutton Council has also developed a Domestic Violence and Abuse strategy. This strategy was agreed by the Safer Sutton Partnership in January 2015 and, through a multi-agency approach, aims to tackle domestic violence and abuse (in all its forms) through:

- Identify
- Prevent
- Protect

There are a number of actions within the strategy that are aimed at working directly with children and young people. Many of these are in reference to 'education and raising awareness', 'improving access and quality of services' and 'identifying and working with children and young people that are in domestic violence and abuse high risk homes'.

The measures of success for the strategy are:

- Increased reporting (including non-crime)
- Reduced number of repeat incidents

- Reduction in Child Protection cases where Domestic Violence and Abuse is a risk factor and
- Increased prosecutions
- Increased use of domestic violence and abuse sanctions such as Injunctions, Non Molestation Orders and Occupation Orders, in adult safeguarding cases
- Increased use of other sanctions as appropriate e.g. BOBB, Alcohol Banning Orders etc

Of these measures of success, they are none that are focussed on improving the outcomes for children. For a more successful strategy, it would be beneficial to include more child-focussed outcomes.

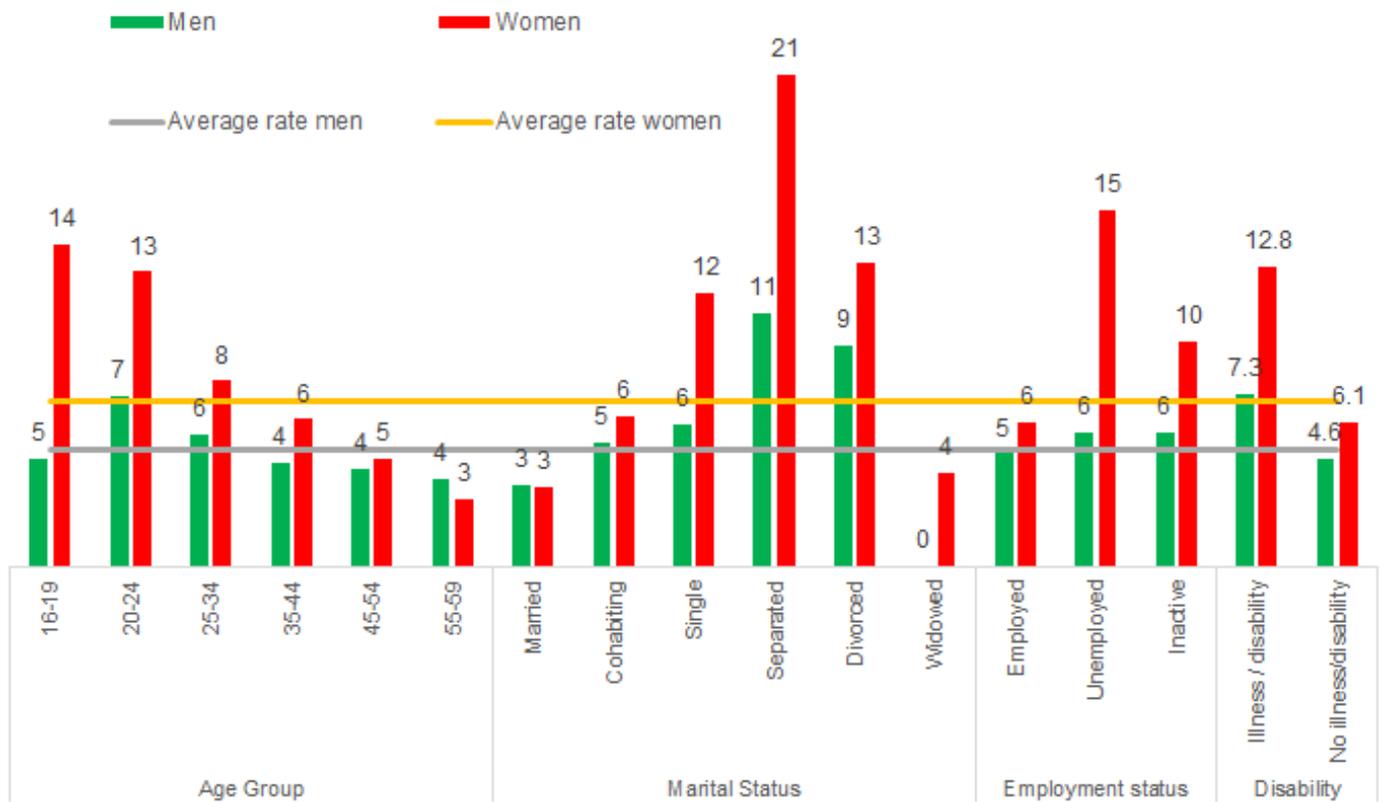
5. Factors influencing domestic violence and abuse prevalence

The following sets out some of the factors that might influence the prevalence of domestic violence and abuse. This will help to identify the groups in the population of Sutton that may have a higher prevalence of domestic violence and abuse incidents. These should not be seen to be determinants (i.e. male has mental health issue so will be a perpetrator of domestic violence), however these influencing factors have been present in some cases where domestic violence and abuse has been present in the family.

5.1 Demographic factors

There are groups within the population that are more likely to experience domestic violence. The Crime Survey for 2011/12 shows the groups that are more likely to experience domestic violence and abuse are younger residents (aged 24 years and under), those that are separated, residents that are unemployed, and those with a disability or illness.

In all of these groups, women were much more likely to have experienced domestic violence and abuse than men, as summarised in the following graph:



5.2 Individual factors

5.2.1 The 'Toxic Trio' - Domestic Violence, Substance misuse and mental health issues

The term 'Toxic Trio' has been used to describe the issue of domestic violence, mental health issues and substance misuse in a household with children and young people. This is as a result of research demonstrating that where one or more of these issues is present in a household, harm to women and children is a higher risk. As a result, these three are often viewed as indicators of risk of harm to children and young people.

There is a complex relationship between these three issues:

- Domestic violence may be the result of a woman who uses drugs being being more likely to be in a relationship with volatile men; or,
- Alcohol and substance misuse may be a result of their experience of domestic violence

Due to this complex relationship, it is important that Sutton Council is able to support parents to be able to provide the most suitable environment for children.

Mental health issues and Alcohol and substance misuse

Alcohol and substance misuse

Research by the National Crime Survey (2010/11) found that 21% of those who had experienced partner abuse in the last year believed the perpetrator was under the influence of alcohol while eight per cent thought they were under the influence of illicit drugs.

Research by the London Drugs and Alcohol Network (LDNA) also found that women who had experienced domestic violence and abuse were 5.5 times more likely to be diagnosed with a substance misuse problem over their lifetime. The research found the misuse problems began following their experiences of domestic violence and that substance use was used to dull the physical and emotional pain.

Looking at local rates of alcohol and substance misuse in Sutton, in 2013/14 there were 317 per 100,000 alcohol specific admissions to hospital. This rate is lower than England (374) and London (346). However it is higher than many of our near neighbouring boroughs: Merton (308), and Royal Borough of Kingston (274). As Sutton has higher rates than some of the neighbours, it suggests that there could be the risk of a higher domestic violence and abuse prevalence in Sutton, than Merton and Royal Borough of Kingston.

It was not possible to identify rates for substance misuse in the borough.

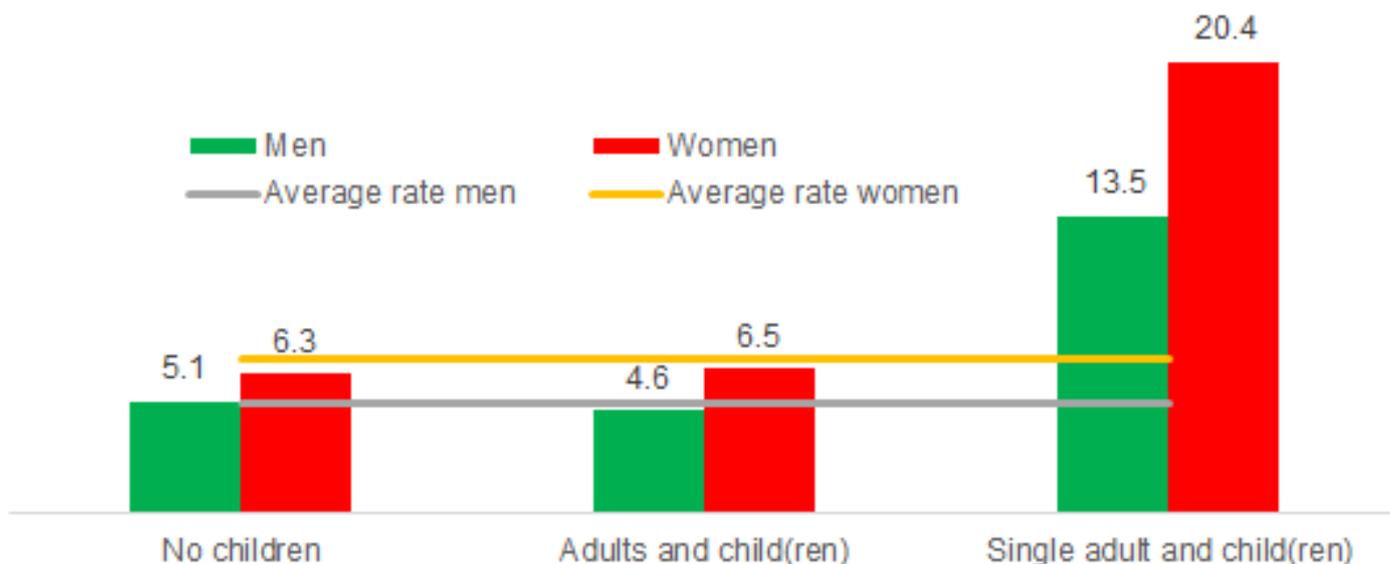
Mental health issues

Much like alcohol and substance misuse, mental health issues can be seen to increase the risk of domestic violence and also be the symptom. Research by Women's Aid found that women who have experienced domestic violence have higher rates of mental illness: 64% experience post-traumatic stress disorder, 48% have depression, and 18% attempt or commit suicide.

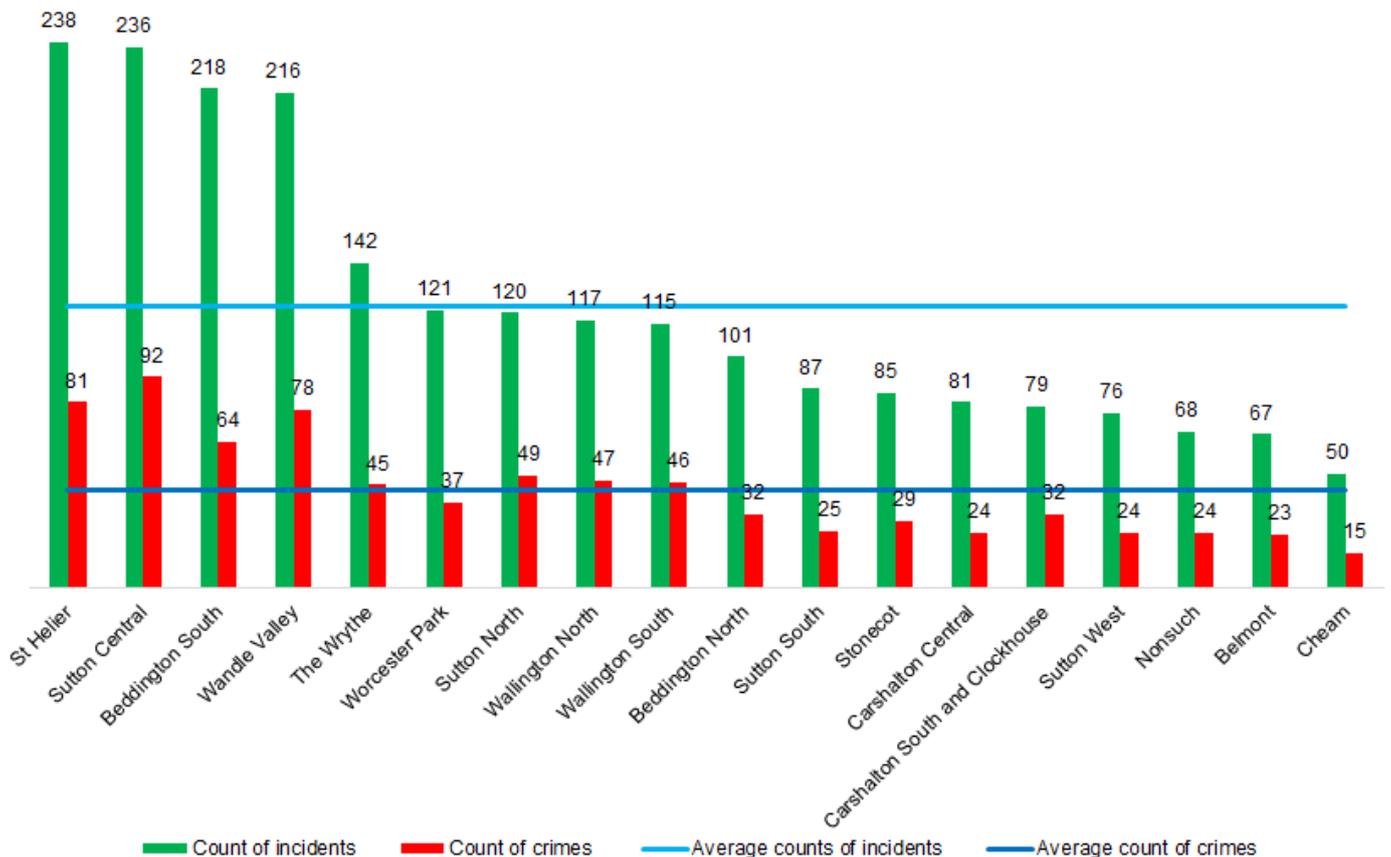
There are no definitive figures for the prevalence of residents with mental health issues in the borough, however figures published by Public Health England help to identify the possible scale. For example, of the residents that completed a GP survey, 4% have reported a long-term mental health problem. This is slightly below the average for England (4%) but higher than Merton (3.6%) and Kingston (3.2%).

5.3 Household type factors

The Crime Survey for 2011/12 also shows the percentage of residents that have experienced domestic violence by household type. This analysis shows that both males and females in single parent households are significantly more likely to be victims of domestic violence, particularly in women.



In Sutton we know that there are 11,000 households that are single parent (with dependent children) households, making up 7% of the households in the borough. This percentage varies geographically, with some areas of the borough have much higher rates, such as St Helier (13%), Wandle Valley (13%) and Beddington South (11%). This is supported and mirrored in the recording of incidents and crimes in the wards across the borough, whereby the areas with higher rates of single parent families have higher prevalence of domestic violence and abuse incidents and crimes:



Source: Ward level domestic violence incidents and crimes, 2012/13, SSPS

Impact of domestic violence and abuse on Children and young people

In 2008 UNICEF gathered evidence that aimed to document the impact of domestic violence and abuse on children and young people. The research found that children and young people who are exposed to domestic violence may suffer from a range of severe or lasting effects.

The following sets out the key impacts of domestic violence and abuse on children and young people:

- Increased risk of children becoming victims of abuse themselves** - There is a common link between domestic violence and child abuse, with many of the victims of child abuse reporting incidents of domestic violence.
- Significant risk to the child's physical, emotional and social development** - The research has shown that young children that are exposed to violence in the home experience added emotional stress that can adversely impact development. Later in life, exposure to domestic violence is seen to impede the development of social and learning skills and may exhibit risky behaviours. In later life, children that were exposed to domestic

violence are more likely to be at greater risk of substance misuse and criminal behaviour.

- **Continuing cycle of violence** - Children that experience or exposed to domestic violence are more likely to become perpetrators or victims of domestic violence in their home as an adult.

The impact of exposure to domestic violence has instant and long last effects on children and young people. This highlights the importance of minimising and stopping this exposure at all stages of the life cycle.

6. Domestic Violence and Abuse Prevalence

The following section aims to provide an overview of the national and local prevalence of domestic violence and abuse witnessed by children and young people.

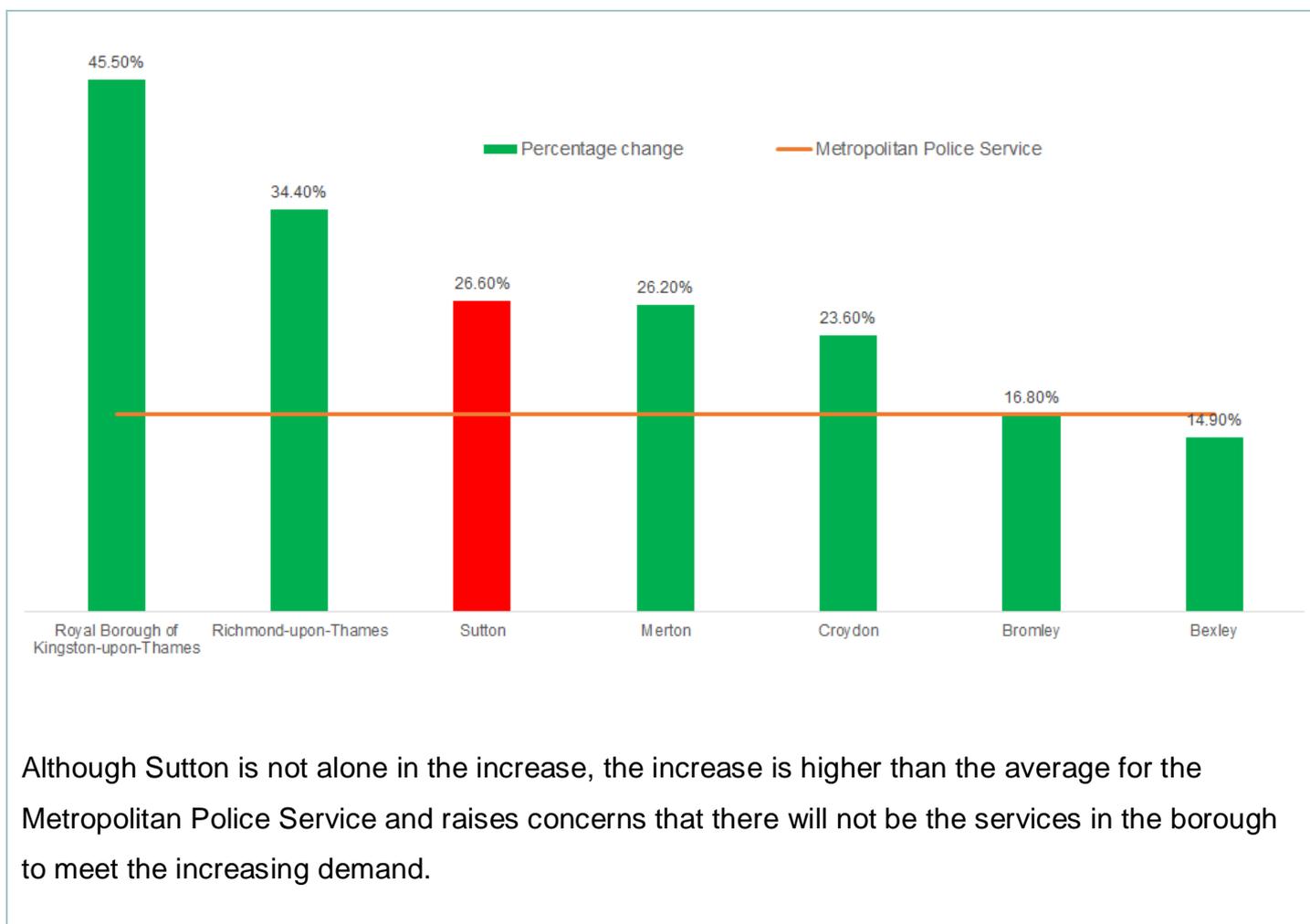
Please note that only a minority of incidents of domestic violence are reported to the police, varying between 23% and 35%. As a result it is difficult to develop a true picture of domestic violence incidents and rates. The following figures should be seen to only represent a proportion of the total number of incidents.

Adult rates of Domestic Violence (16+ population)

One of the key sources available to understand the rates of domestic violence and abuse is the number of reports made to the local police. In 2012/13 there were 2,217 reported (to the Police) incidents of domestic violence and 767 Crimes counted.

In August 2015 there were 114 domestic crimes. This was roughly in line with the neighbouring boroughs (Royal Borough of Kingston, 99 and Merton, 136). Compared to August 2014, Sutton has had an 8.6% increase in the number of domestic crimes (105 domestic crimes in August 2014), which is just below the average for the Metropolitan Police Service.

Looking at 12 month rolling averages (up to August 2015) there have been 1,375 domestic crimes in Sutton, which is 26% increase in the 12 months up to August 2014. Although a large increase, this follows the trend of many other South-West London boroughs:



6.1 Children and young people domestic violence and abuse rates

As children and young people tend to be seen as passive in domestic violence and abuse, there is often little recording of the numbers that have been a victim or have witnessed the incidents. This makes it difficult to understand the national extent of children and young people experiencing and witnessing domestic violence and abuse.

The NSPCC have identified, through exploring previous research and studies, that around one in five children have been exposed to domestic violence and abuse, with a third of children witnessing domestic violence also experience another form of abuse.

Looking at children as the perpetrator rates, again it is not possible to identify national figures, with the NSPCC estimating that one in five teenagers have been physically abused by their boyfriends or girlfriends. Unfortunately it has not been possible to identify any figures that show the extent of children / young people as perpetrators of domestic violence against their parents.

National and local rates of children and young people's exposure to domestic violence and abuse

One in five children have been exposed to domestic



This equates to approximately 9,000* children in Sutton (0-17 year olds)

A third of children witnessing domestic violence have also experienced another form of abuse.



This equates to approximately 3,000* children in Sutton

One in five teenagers have been physically abused by their boyfriends or girlfriends.



This is approximately 2,000* teenagers in Sutton (13-17 year olds)

**These numbers must be used in caution as these are approximate figures, based on the findings by NSPCC*

Within the borough, the most reliable figures to help understand the extent of exposure of children and young people to domestic violence and abuse, requires using sources of information where domestic violence may be a related feature or reasoning for the referral, such as information recorded in Child Protection Plans, MARAC data and Families Matters data.

Analysis of these data sets has shown that there are a number of children and young people in the borough that could be at risk of experiencing or witnessing domestic violence. It has also shown,

as in the Families Matter data, that children's behaviour has been impacted as a result of domestic violence. We have also seen that there are a small number of cases where children are the perpetrator of domestic violence, albeit very small.

6.1.1 Child Protection Plans (CPP)

In August 2015 all current Child Protection Plans were reviewed, to identify the occurrence of domestic violence and abuse. At the time, there were 220 children with Child Protection Plans, from 118 families. Of the children on CPPs, domestic violence and abuse was present in 64% of all cases.

In the majority of the cases, domestic violence and abuse was present between the parents / adults. There were also a small number of cases where domestic violence was seen to be present in the child's relationships and where the child was the perpetrator (against their parent).

In most cases, the children lived in families where the parents had a form of a mental health illness, suffered from drug and alcohol misuse or the parents were not present (left the family or were in prison).

Many of the children with plans were seen to have had their emotional development impacted as a result of the domestic violence and abuse, with children being referred to a variety of services (such as CAMHS, ELSA) to help address these issues.

6.2.2 MARAC Data

A MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference) is a regular meeting to discuss how to help victims at high risk of serious harm. In Sutton, this includes the Police, Children's Social Services, Health, IDVA specialists and other relevant agencies. Together, an action plan is produced for each victim and all the agencies agree and understand their role to deliver the plan for each individual.

For each MARAC, detail is collected on each of the cases discussed. This information has helped to inform the following:

- In the 12 month period up to August 2015, Sutton MARAC has looked at 196 cases, of which there are 279 children involved. As MARACs are focussed on only the highest risk cases, these figures suggest that there are a number of children that are at high risk of witnessing domestic violence.
- There has been one case of a child (aged under 17) hurting others. This is a very small number, but in line with the national average for MARACs.

6.2.3 Families Matters Data

The Families Matter Service works with vulnerable children and young people aged 0-19 and their families who present with complex needs below the threshold for statutory intervention. This service will be of relevance and use to children where domestic violence has or is part of their life.

Over a 6 month period, from October 2014 to March 2015, Families Matter worked with a total of 196 individuals, from 136 families. Of these individuals, 50% featured some form of domestic violence and abuse, whether current or historic, which accounted for 33% of the (136) families.

Looking at the cases where domestic violence and abuse was present and where it has been possible to measure the impact of the intervention, it has been possible to identify that 50% of individuals (50% of families) showed some form of progress and 10% (8% of families) were seen to have made a negative change. Further analysis and research is required to identify, for those who have showed some form of progress, the interventions that were seen to have had the greatest impact.

7. Domestic Violence Services in London Borough of Sutton

For this needs assessment a service mapping exercise was conducted (appendix 1). The aim of this was to identify the services that are available in the borough, who can access these services and how people are referred to the service.

The mapping exercise identified a number of issues with the current service provision in Sutton. These are as follows:

7.1 No clear pathway for children, young people and families accessing services

Of the services that are available in Sutton, there are a variety of different ways children, young people and families can access these services, however there is no clear multi-agency advertised pathway for residents and professionals to refer to and access.

In the domestic violence and abuse guidance, NICE recommend the development of an integrated commissioning strategy to ensure there is an integrated care pathway for the services. This strategy should include services that cover all risk levels and age groups and include agencies working together to deliver services.

With regards to the integrated Care Pathway, the Council should ensure there are pathways for identifying, referring, providing interventions and recovery for those that are experiencing, including the perpetrators, of domestic violence and abuse. NICE have suggested that the service pathways should have a consistent and robust mechanism for assessing the risks for all involved.

It is also advisable that the pathway is joined and integrated with that of the adults, to ensure that the services work together, supporting the family and maintain and strengthen the relationship of the child and the family (where this is suitable).

7.2 Limited specialist domestic violence and abuse services available for children, young people and families

The analysis of the local data has shown that there is a need for a range of specialist domestic violence services to support children, young people and families in the borough, that also cover a range of needs and age groups. However, the service mapping exercise and analysis of the Child Protection Plans has shown that a number of services to support children and young people are missing.

Existing Specialist Domestic Violence and Abuse Services for children and young people in the London Borough of Sutton

The service mapping exercise has shown that there are no specialist domestic violence and abuse services for children that have (or currently) experiencing this issue. However there are a number of other services that are available to support and work with children to address the symptoms, such as Jas-U-Turn, Taming the Temper Dragon, CAMHS and ELSA (Education Literacy Support Assistant)

Analysis of the CPPs has shown that the most commonly referred to services for support were:

- The Education Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) - Teaching Assistants that are trained to help children understand and regulate their emotions
- The Incredible Years Programme - Parenting course for parents with children aged 3- 8 years, where the focus is on developing parenting skills in a number of areas including stimulation and behaviour management.
- There were also a high number of cases where grandparents and non-immediate family members were stated as being a key source of support.

The issue of limited specialist domestic violence and abuse services for children and young people, is best understood when broken down and explored in the following sub-sections:

7.2.1 Services should be varied to meet the needs of the children, young people and families

Research by the LGA found that domestic violence and abuse can impact children differently and is highly dependent on their age, ethnicity, family background, support networks and family environment. As a result, services need to be able to manage and respond to ensure the child has the support required.

The behavioural management services available in Sutton (Jas-U-Turn and Taming the Temper Dragon), are aimed at different age groups, providing the children in Sutton with the age-based support that they require. Within the services provided for adults, a programme, funded by London Councils, is also available to provide information and advice for black and minority ethnic groups.

It would be beneficial for children, young people and families to have this idea extrapolated across the other specialist services, to ensure these individuals are accessing the relevant and suitable services for lasting effects.

The LGA also suggests that there needs to be an awareness and understanding of the issues which may affect children and young people from Black and minority ethnic communities:

“...including abuse perpetrated by extended family members, forced marriage or female genital mutilation. Children from Black or minority ethnic communities may also be more isolated, or may have to overcome religious and cultural pressures, or they may be afraid of bringing shame onto their 'family honour'. For example, in many cases the only opportunity to stop a forced marriage will be through education professionals recognising the warning signs in the classroom or lecture theatre.”

7.2.2 Limited referrals to specialist domestic violence and abuse services

Analysis of the CPPs and MARAC data has shown that a high number of children and young people at high risk and are receiving a multi-agency approach to support and protect them through this current experience. This ensures that the children and young people are getting the immediate protection required. However, the data, particularly in CPPs, appears to show a limited referrals to specialist domestic violence and abuse services that could provide a more holistic service, with lasting effects, for the children and young people.

In the NICE domestic violence and abuse guidance, it recommends that a coordinated package of care and support that takes individual preferences and need into account should be provided. The care should address a range of impacts - emotional, psychological and physical (including the wider educational, behavioural and social effects. As a result, Sutton needs to ensure that there are the services available and there is awareness in all the relevant services, to make effective and lasting referrals.

7.2.3 Limited services to re-build and strengthen the relationship with the family

Of the services commissioned and the services children and young people are being referred to, there is potential to increase and develop the emphasis on rebuilding and strengthening the relationship and readdressing the power balance between the between the child / young person and their family. This could become a key role of the care pathway, as the adult can often feel that they are unable discuss the impact on their child and cannot talk to their child about the experiences, due to fear of their child being taken into care.

NICE recommend that interventions should be provided to strengthen the relationship between the child and the family:

“Provide interventions that aim to strengthen the relationship between the child or young person and their non-abusive parent or carer. This may involve individual or group sessions, or both. The sessions should include advocacy, therapy and other support that addresses the impact of domestic violence and abuse on parenting. Sessions should be delivered to children and their non-abusive parent or carer in parallel, or together.”

7.2.4 No holistic and encompassing services for children and young people

As children and young people who have witnessed domestic violence and abuse are at risk of having their emotional and social development impacted, it is important to ensure that there are a range of services, which aim to promote well-being, achievement and self-esteem in later life. These specialist services, although partially available through existing services (i.e. not domestic violence specialist services), are not currently easily accessible in the borough. The LGA suggest that these children and young people should have access to the therapeutic interventions and more specialist domestic violence and abuse services, such as group work programmes. This will help to improve the chances and experiences for a child, now and in their future.

7.3 Unknown spend on services

The mapping of services has shown that there is no co-ordinated spend on commissioning domestic violence and abuse services, and as a result there are a number of gaps in service provision. Please see appendix item one for details on the service mapping exercise.

There are currently many organisations and charities campaigning central government and local government to ensure that the funding for domestic violence and abuse services are not further reduced. As Sutton Council, like all other local authorities, is having to make severe reductions in their funding to manage the shortfall of funding from central government, it is important to ensure that residents are still able to access the domestic violence and abuse services required.

7.4 Limited support for adult perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse

As well as providing perpetrator support for children and young people (see appendix item one), it is also important that the Council provides perpetrator support for adults to improve outcomes for children, young people and families. There are currently two services available in the borough:

- The Phoenix Perpetrator Programme is a 15 week group programme for male perpetrators and is anticipated to work with 32 men over an 18 month period.
- The Everyman Project provides counselling to help support men in changing their violent and abusive behaviours, with sessions spot purchased by the Council.

For Sutton Council, the services to support male perpetrators could be costly and have an unknown spend. There is also a risk that, as there is no clear referral process, which those that are experiencing the domestic violence and abuse are not receiving the support and information and advice they require. Looking forward, the Council should consider commissioning a service for perpetrators, with a known and manageable cost, that compliments and is integrated with the services for those that experience domestic violence and abuse.

7.5 There is no IDVA (or equivalent) support for children and young people

The main purpose of an IDVA is to address the safety of victims at high risk of harm from intimate partners, ex-partners or family members to secure 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. They also discuss the range of suitable options leading to the creation of a workable safety plan.

The mapping exercise has shown that within Sutton there are a variety of different IDVA staff, of which many are funded by different organisations, as shown in the table below:

Provider of service	Level of service provided	Service Commissioner
Victim Support	2 FTE Officers	Commissioned by SSPS
Sutton Women's Aid	1 FTE (Floating support)	Core Funding by LBS
Victim Support (Pan-London)	1 FTE (based at St Helier Hospital)	MOPAC
Victim Support (Pan-London)	0.5FTE work	MOPAC

Victim Support (Pan-London)	1 shared post (6 boroughs)	MOPAC
Families Matters	1 IDVA trained key worker	Families Matters

As each of these Officers will have varying degrees of awareness for the local area and local issues, it will be important to ensure there is minimal overlap in their work and they have a clear understanding of the support services in the borough for referrals. It will also be important that when a clear referral pathway is developed, these positions are included, to maximise use of all the resources available, and that there is a clear path into and out of these services.

Of these IDVA Officers, none are trained to work with children or young people. Other local authorities have provided an IDVA service for children. The aim of which is to provide specialist services for children that have witnessed or are experiencing domestic violence and abuse in their own relationships.

Specialist IDVA Services for Children: The Den (Blackpool)

The Den in Blackpool provides a children's IDVA service. This service offers specialist support to children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse. This can be through witnessing domestic abuse within the family unit or direct experience (young people in their own relationships).

Any child or young person (aged 0 -21), residing in the Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre or Lancaster and District area, who has been affected by domestic violence and abuse is eligible to access the service.

What services does The Den provide?

- **1-to-1 support** - A chance for the children and young people to talk about their experiences in a safe environment using age appropriate resources, language and a flexible approach to meet each person's individual needs.
- **Individual and group sessions** - Around topics such as safety planning, confidence and self esteem building, safe and unsafe relationships, and domestic violence and abuse. This is delivered in a range of settings such as schools, children's centres, community centres, and is tailored towards the age of the individual or group.
- **Peer support sessions** - An opportunity for young people to meet other young people

who have had similar experiences, gain support from each other and reduce the feeling of isolation.

- **For children under 5** - The service supports the non-abusing parent in re-learning how to interact with their child/ren. This is aimed at rebuilding their relationships and establishing a positive parental role model.
- **Drop in sessions** - Sessions held at a number of local high schools, to make the service easily accessible, to as many young people as possible.
- **Youth forum** - An opportunity for the children/young people to have their say on the issues and decisions which affect them. This is also an opportunity to meet new people and take part in activities and develop their social skills.

The Den is a service provided by 'Empowerment', the result of a Merger between Blackpool Advocacy and Lancaster and District Women's Aid. In previous years, the service has been funded through Comic Relief UK grant funding, however it is not been possible to identify how it has been funded in more recent years.

8. Summary

In summary, this needs assessment has shown that there are no specialist domestic violence and abuse services to support children, young people and families in the borough. However, there are a number of services that are available in the borough, that are provided by a number of different organisations, including the Council, Police, Health Services and Voluntary Organisations. These providers offer a range of services that can be utilised by those experiencing domestic violence and abuse, which if brought together in a multi-agency approach and developed to support children, young people and families, could significantly help to improve outcomes for these individuals. Based on these findings, it is recommended that:

- Recommendation 1 - Strengthen multi-agency working to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.
- Recommendation 2 - Develop an integrated domestic violence and abuse referral pathway for children.
- Recommendation 3 - The CTB to scope the possibility of a co-ordinated budget for domestic violence and abuse across the Council and the partnership.
- Recommendation 4 - Provide children and young people with specialist domestic violence and abuse services.

- Recommendation 5 - Identify the possibility of expanding IDVA support to work with children, young people and families.
- Recommendation 6 - Using a multi-agency group, develop an action plan to ensure the voices of children, young people and families are heard.

9. Appendices

Appendix Item One - Mapping of services *(please see attached spreadsheet)*

Appendix Item Two - NICE Recommendations for Domestic Violence and abuse

- Plan services based on an assessment of need and service mapping
- Participate in a local strategic multi-agency partnership to prevent domestic violence and abuse
- Develop an integrated commissioning strategy
- Commission integrated care pathways
- Create an environment for disclosing domestic violence and abuse
- Ensure trained staff ask people about domestic violence and abuse
- Adopt clear protocols and methods for information sharing
- Tailor support to meet people's needs
- Help people who find it difficult to access services
- Identify and, where necessary, refer children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse
- Provide specialist domestic violence and abuse services for children and young people
- Provide specialist advice, advocacy and support as part of a comprehensive referral pathway
- Provide people who experience domestic violence and abuse and have a mental health condition with evidence-based treatment for that condition
- Commission and evaluate tailored interventions for people who perpetrate domestic violence and abuse
- Provide specific training for health and social care professionals in how to respond to domestic violence and abuse
- GP practices and other agencies should include training on, and a referral pathway for, domestic violence and abuse
- Pre-qualifying training and continuing professional development for health and social care professionals should include domestic violence and abuse