

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 14 NOVEMBER 2006

EAST AYRSHIRE DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY 2005-2008

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members of the Policy & Resources Committee on progress in relation to the East Ayrshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2005-2008.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The East Ayrshire Domestic Abuse Forum was established in 2002. The Forum comprises representatives from across the statutory and voluntary sector and was established to take forward the national strategy to address domestic abuse in Scotland.

- 2.2 A report was presented to Policy & Resources Committee on 15 November 2005 seeking approval for a Domestic Abuse Strategy 2005-2008.

- 2.3 The Strategy has the overall undernoted objectives:

- Provision of a consistent, co-ordinated response to women, children and young people experiencing domestic abuse in East Ayrshire;
- Raising community awareness of domestic abuse;
- Promoting good practice within and between agencies;
- Ensuring the needs of women, children and young people are identified and met on an ongoing basis.

- 2.4 East Ayrshire Women's Aid provides information, support and refuge to women, children and young people who are experiencing domestic abuse. In 2005/06, they received 2677 requests for information and support and 260 requests for refuge. They were able to support 66 women and 99 children in their own refuges and found additional places for 20 women and 26 children in other refuges.

In the past six months East Ayrshire Women's Aid have received 1264 requests for information and support and have had 149 requests for refuge.

3. PROGRESS IN 2005/06

- 3.1 **Objective 1 *Provision of a consistent, co-ordinated response to women, children and young people experiencing domestic abuse in East Ayrshire.***

- 3.1.1 The '*Good Practice Handbook*' has been issued to all agencies represented on the Forum. It aims to support frontline staff in responding to the needs of

women and children who have been subject to domestic abuse. The section relating to children and families was approved by the East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee.

3.1.2 Domestic Abuse is fully integrated into the Community Planning process and key actions in relation to domestic abuse will be reflected in the Promoting Community Safety Theme which also doubles as the thematic group for the integrated Children and Young People's Service Plan.

3.2 Objective 2 *To raise community awareness of domestic abuse.*

3.2.1 A poster campaign is ongoing and a series of posters have been developed which are displayed across venues in East Ayrshire.

3.2.2 Learning Partnerships continue to raise awareness of domestic abuse through curricular programmes in secondary school. Five secondary schools are involved in this.

3.2.3 New Cumnock Nursery is involved in a pilot Abuse Prevention Programme which involves the use of a drama production with young children to help them understand the concept of respect.

3.3 Objective 3 *To promote good practice within and between agencies*

3.3.1 A multi-agency training strategy has been developed and a training calendar issued to all relevant agencies and services. In addition, a representative from Women's Aid sits on the Child Protection Committee Training Sub Group and Practitioners Sub Group.

3.4 Objective 4 *To ensure that the needs of women, children and young people experiencing domestic abuse are identified and met on an ongoing basis.*

3.4.1 Funding was secured partially through the Violence Against Women Fund to make internal improvements to the Auchinleck Refuge. A Link Nurse post, funded temporarily through Community Regeneration funding to support women with mental health problems who have been subject to domestic abuse, has proved to be very successful. Funding for this finishes in March 2007 and the Community Health Partnership will be considering future options.

3.4.2 Additional funding was secured by East Ayrshire Women's Aid from the Violence Against Women Fund to establish an additional Children and Young Person's Worker. The intention nationally was to establish posts in all women's aid organisations to ensure that there was dedicated support for children and young people. This links directly to the Scottish Executive's key outcomes for children and young people.

3.4.3 A toolkit for employers highlighting the impact of domestic abuse in the workplace has been produced. The toolkit will be distributed at a training event in March 2007 and, subsequently, through a series of information seminars.

4. EMERGING ISSUES

4.1 Since the Strategy was produced there has been guidance issued from the Scottish Executive regarding the integration of the work of multi agency partnerships addressing domestic abuse in relation to integrated children's service planning. The overall aim is to improve outcomes for children and young people who have been affected by domestic abuse and a new monitoring framework has been developed nationally for women's aid organisations to complete. Although this differs slightly from the Quality Improvement Framework for Children's Service Planning it is intended that these two frameworks will eventually come together.

4.2 A draft Violence Against Women Strategic Framework has recently been issued by the Scottish Executive. This has implications for the remit of the Forum. Once the final Strategic Framework is issued a review of the Forum remit will be undertaken.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Nil.

7. POLICY/LEGAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The East Ayrshire Domestic Abuse Strategy is integral to both the Promoting Community Safety Theme of the Community Plan and the Children and Young Person's Service Plan.

7.2 As one of the key partners on the Forum it is intended that a report will also be submitted to NHS Ayrshire and Arran Board for their interest.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Members of the Policy & Resources Committee are asked to:

- (i) note the progress made in implementing the East Ayrshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2005-2008.

Graham Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

GRS/KG/SR
12 October 2006

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. East Ayrshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2005-2008.
2. Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Experiencing Domestic Abuse (CYPEDA): Monitoring & Evaluation Framework and Toolkit

Members seeking further information please contact Kay Gilmour, Head of Community Support, Tel: (01563) 576104.

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