

DBC Equality Impact Assessment Form

Directorate: Finance and Operations

Service: Resident Services

Policy / function / activity being reviewed: Supporting Victims of Domestic Abuse
Policy

Supporting Directorate Support Officer: Julie Still

Date completed: 30 September 2013

Review date: 2016

Step 1 – Identifying the Purpose / Aims

1. What type of policy, service, activity or function is this?

Existing **New / proposed X** **Changing / updated**

2. What is the aim and purpose of the policy, activity, service or function?

This policy aims to provide a corporate approach within Dacorum Borough Council to deliver an accessible, supportive and appropriate service to victims of domestic abuse.

3. Outline any proposals being considered.

It is proposed that the Council adopts this policy and implements the proposals within.

4. Who is the policy, activity, service or function intended to help / benefit / serve?

The policy is intended to benefit any victim of domestic abuse who approaches Dacorum Borough Council for a service or advice and any employee of the Council. The policy is intended to encourage victims of domestic abuse to report it as early as possible, to support them where needed, to signpost to the relevant agencies where required and to help protect victims when needed.

5. Does the policy, activity, service or function have any specific aims or objectives in relation to equality, social inclusion or community cohesion?

It is recognised that domestic abuse is not restricted to a specific gender, age group, race, religion or socio-economic standing and takes into account elder abuse, forced marriages, male victims and same sex relationships. It also recognises that domestic abuse can occur between family members, and is not just restricted to current or former partners.

The policy suggests that the Council adopts the following definition of Domestic Abuse: - "Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between any persons who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender and sexuality."

The policy is inclusive

Step 2 – Considering existing information and what this tells you

6. Summarise any data / research or performance management information about the policy, function or activity that is available. This could include equalities monitoring information; surveys; complaints or grievances.

Data / Information

Domestic abuse will affect 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men in their lifetime. Source: - Living Without Abuse, 2013.

Domestic abuse leads to, on average, two women being murdered each week and 30 men per year. Source: - Living Without Abuse 2013.

Domestic abuse accounts for 16% of all violent crime, however it is still the violent crime least likely to be reported to police. Source: - Crime in England and Wales 2004/5.

Domestic abuse has more repeat victims than any other crime on on average there will have been 35 assaults before a victim calls the police. Source: - Living Without Abuse 2013.

Domestic abuse is the single most quoted reason for becoming homeless. Source:- Shelter 2002.

In 2010 the Forced Marriage Unit responded to 1735 reports of possible force marriages. Source: - Living Without Abuse 2013.

Nearly one in ten older people experience elder abuse with the majority of cases occurring within the home. Source: - Age UK 2013

Around 75% of domestic abuse victims are targeted at work, including harassing phone calls, arriving at the office unannounced and physical assaults. Source: - Corporate Alliance Against Domestic Violence 2013.

7. Is there any evidence of negative differential impact on any of the following? (Some equality categories may be more relevant than others)

Race or ethnicity

None
<i>Gender and transgender</i>
None
<i>Age</i>
None
<i>Disability</i>
None
<i>Religion or belief/ faith communities</i>
None
<i>Lesbian, gay, bisexual people</i>
None
<i>Other socially excluded communities or groups</i>
None

Step 3 – Assessing the Impact

8. Is there any evidence of higher or lower take-up of the service, facility or opportunity by any group /community and if so, is there an explanation for this?

There are a higher number of women reporting domestic abuse to Dacorum Borough Council than men. This reflects reports that since the age of 16 years almost 30% of women compared to 17% of men have experiences some form of domestic abuse (Chaplin et al. 2007).

Not only are women more likely to have experienced domestic abuse, they are more likely to have experienced multiple incidents of abuse. Indeed 89% of those individuals who have been subject to 4 or more incidents of domestic abuse (same perpetrator) since the age of 16 are women (Walby and Allen 2004).

The higher

9. Could any of the associated rules, requirements or regulations of the function, activity or policy affect the accessibility of the service/ activity to any groups or communities?

No

10. If the impact or effects are adverse for any community or group, can they be defended i.e. in order to provide equality for another community under legislation or policy?

Yes

No

Please give details below.

n/a

Step 4 – Dealing with adverse or unlawful impact

11. What can be done to improve the policy, service, function or any proposals in order to reduce or remove any adverse impact or effects identified?

It is a national requirement under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 that a Domestic Homicide Review is undertaken following any homicide. Action plans are formed from the reviews and implemented to address any adverse impact on individuals and groups that may be identified and learning is shared nationally via the Home Office.

12. What would be needed to be able to do this? Are the resources available?

Action plans identify not only what needs to happen but also how and who is responsible for the implementation of the actions.

Step 5 – Consultation and Feedback

13. Outline your proposals to consult with those affected on proposed changes.

Consultation has taken place within the Council Services and with the Community Safety Partnership.

Step 6 – The decision

14. What needs to be done?

N/A

Step 7 – Monitoring, review and evaluation

15. What monitoring and review mechanisms are in place or will be developed.

There are Designated Domestic Abuse Officers in all service areas. They will be reporting to a central group who will be responsible for monitoring reports of domestic abuse and safeguarding both children and vulnerable adults. Meetings will take place on a quarterly basis.

Cases and any difficulties experienced with services or procedures will be identified in this forum.

Levels of domestic abuse are also monitored by the Community Safety Partnership, through MARAC (multi agency risk assessment conferences), and the domestic violence form - DBC services are active partners all both of these partnerships

Step 8 – The service plan

16. What needs to be included in the Service Development Plan?

N/A

17. Does an Action Plan need to be put together to ensure everything is actioned?

NO

Step 9 – Publishing the Results

Copy of the completed form to be sent to the Anne Stunell – Human Resources, ext. 2089