



# Doncaster Council

## Report

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Date: 26/09/19

### To the Chair and Members of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

#### REPORT TITLE: Hidden Harm: the impact of parental substance misuse on children and young people

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Councillor Nigel Ball, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure and Culture	All	No
Councillor Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools		

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The experience of children and young people living with, and impacted by, parental problem alcohol and other drug use has come to be known as 'Hidden Harm'. The effects on children and young people include:
  - Physical maltreatment and neglect
  - Poor physical and mental health
  - Development of health harming behaviours in later life, for example using alcohol and drugs at an early age which predicts more entrenched future use
  - Poor school attendance due to inappropriate caring responsibilities
  - Low educational attainment
  - Involvement in anti-social or criminal behaviour

In 2018, in the Doncaster adult drug and alcohol treatment service (Aspire) 31.4% (52) new presentations for drugs (opiate and non- opiate) and 30.9% (43) of new presentations for alcohol were people living with children (a total of 446 affected children).

For Doncaster Children's Services Trust, in March 2019, out of 2718 open cases, 955 cases cited had parental alcohol/substance misuse (35.1%). In addition 5.47% of early help open cases (129 of 2357 cases) had parental

alcohol/substance misuse.

It is helpful to consider the different levels of response that can be adopted to address Hidden Harm; individual level, families and social networks, organisations, communities and finally society

Some service responses, which specifically address Hidden Harm include:

- Families Moving On Together (FMOT): a whole family intervention of group work and one to one support provided by Project 3 and Aspire which has been running for 4 years
- Multi Systemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect (MST CAN): offers help and support for the whole family, with special attention given to parents to help them overcome a range of personal challenges, particularly where a child may be at risk
- Stronger Families: The aim of Stronger Families is to change the way families are supported to improve their lives using a whole family approach co-ordinating services through a lead worker

There are some key delivery challenges to improve responses:

- It is a complex whole system issue, for which no one commissioning or delivery organisation is responsible.
- Historical difficulty in getting buy in, for delivery of the Hidden Harm Strategy 2016, led by Public Health.
- The Neglect Toolkit (practitioner's tool) is not as well used across the board as it could be: however the Neglect Strategic Group is in the process of revising the Strategy.
- Across the whole system, approaches to whole family working could be better embedded.
- The capacity of FMOT delivery does not match the order of magnitude of the size of the problem hence early intervention opportunities are missed.

#### **EXEMPT REPORT:**

2. The information contained in this report is not exempt

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to give consideration to the attached presentation and detail content in this report.

#### **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?**

4. There will be a system wide effort across Doncaster to improve the outcomes for children and young people affected by parental substance misuse. It is a complex issue for which there is no one set solution, requiring co-operation

across the system.

## BACKGROUND

5. A strategic update on substance misuse was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in June 2019, following which the chair of the Health and Adult Social care Overview and Scrutiny Panel requested that the subject of Hidden Harm be presented to the Panel.
6. A presentation is attached outlining the issues is provided to the Panel.
7. This contains the following proposed actions for improvement:
  - A refreshed strategic commitment from Doncaster Safeguarding Partnership
  - The development of a formal joint working protocol between Aspire and Doncaster Children's Services Trust which strengthens intervening early
  - Greater capacity for FMOT delivery. This would require a wider range of professionals to be trained to deliver the intervention to reach a larger cohort of families
  - Hidden Harm responses to be integral in the development of the Doncaster Alcohol Alliance: a key strategic group of senior officers, convened to drive improvement actions on the harms of alcohol (first meeting September 2019)

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8. All possible complementary options within a whole system approach were considered.

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

9. A range of complementary options are recommended for consideration.

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

- 10.

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	<p><b>Doncaster Working:</b> Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li><li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li><li>• Inward Investment</li></ul>	Parental work options are improved through high quality support and treatment to address addiction
	<p><b>Doncaster Living:</b> Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy</p>	None

	<p>spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster</li> <li>• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home</li> <li>• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport</li> <li>• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean</li> <li>• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school</li> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better</li> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>	<p>Outcomes for children and young people are improved through high quality support and parental treatment of substance misuse</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</li> </ul>	<p>An 'ecological' whole system approach with a range of actions is taken to improve responses to the impact of parental substance misuse</p>
	<p><b>Connected Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modern, efficient and flexible workforce</li> <li>• Modern, accessible customer interactions</li> <li>• Operating within our resources and delivering value for money</li> <li>• A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>• Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</li> <li>• Working with our partners and</li> </ul>	<p>none</p>

	residents to provide effective leadership and governance	
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## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

11. To reduce the impact of parental substance misuse there is an assumption that high quality adult substance misuse treatment of sufficient capacity will be maintained.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [HMP 5.9.19]**

12. This area of work assists with our statutory duties under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 under which Local Authorities are responsible for improving the health of their local population and for public health services including services aimed at reducing drug and alcohol misuse. In addition, the recommendations will assist in ensuring the Council complies with its duty under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 in discharging its functions with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [HR 06/09/19]**

13. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. In event of any training requirements being identified, these costs would need to be met from within existing resources.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [BT 10/09/2019]**

14. There are no immediate and obvious HR implications associated with this Corporate Report. Designated individuals from within the Council's Public Health Staffing Establishment - Vulnerable People & Improving Lives team co-ordinate aspects of the Hidden Harm subject matter. Any additional resource would be secured through the Safer Doncaster Recruitment policies and processes as necessary.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [PW 03/09/19 ]**

15. There are no anticipated technology implications in relation to this report.

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [HC 13/08/19]**

16. Hidden Harm causes health inequalities to affected families; hence improvement of support for affected families will contribute to reducing these inequalities. Specifically, helping children be ready for school and reducing social isolation and loneliness via improved family functioning. Consideration should be given with respect to how to measure improved outcomes for families who receive hidden harm support. An increase in uptake of services is a positive outcome, due to the protective nature of family support and adult substance misuse treatment

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [HC 13/08/19]**

17. The recommendations will contribute to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations with different communities. People with protected characteristics will not be adversely

affected.

## **CONSULTATION**

18. This report has been produced in co-operation with members of the Public Health team who have responsibilities to improve the health of both children and adults. Other professionals were consulted, from Doncaster Children's Services Trust and Doncaster Clinical Commissioning Group

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

19. None

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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