

OFFICER DECISION RECORD 2 FORM

This form should be used to record Officer Decisions which have a financial impact (income/expenditure) between £25k - £100k.

Decision Reference No: e.g. Directorate/Ref No/Year - 2122007

BOX 1.

DIRECTORATE: Learning Opportunities for Children and Young People

DATE: 13 June 2021

Contact Name: Kaye Rushbrook

Tel. No.: 0779 3560060

Subject Matter: Utilising the £100,000 Mayoral funding identified for Domestic Abuse to provide additionality through increased resources in the Domestic Abuse Navigator team in the Doncaster Children's Service Trust

BOX 2**DECISION TAKEN:**

It is clear that there is an imperative need for an effective whole family approach to DVA to reduce risk and the repeat referrals, whilst addressing the impact DVA has on children and young people. The only team within the Borough who have the whole family approach integrated into their working practices is the DANs Service located within the Doncaster Children's Trust whose reach is currently limited by its resources.

Whilst it is unrealistic to expect the DANs team to be able to work with each and every DVA referral into IDVA and the Hub, the reach could be extended significantly by:

- Creating capacity through a Business Support Post which would increase the capacity of DANs by 10% to allow them to become involved in delivering increased number of courses and seminars to professionals and DVA service users
- Creating a hybrid Community Engagement / Perpetrator Worker to develop DVA Community Champions who could support / signpost victims in the communities as well as link with the Localities work
- Through the increased capacity, develop the Peer Support network where victims support victims which is facilitated by the DANs team.
- Through the increased capacity and supported number of families, develop a service shaper group who could advise the DVA partnership on the services provided.

The recommended option would be to fund Option 2 which provides increased capacity of DANs whilst providing the extended reach of the Service to standard and medium risk DVA referrals whilst linking with communities and localities and tackling both the stigma and acceptance of DVA in local communities.

BOX 3

REASON FOR DECISION AND ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED:

During 2020/21 there has been unprecedented increase in Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) across the Doncaster Borough. Whilst professionals believe this could be largely attributable to Covid19, there is a risk that the increase in referrals could continue due to the acceptance of DVA in communities across the Borough.

As at 28 February 2021, there have been 1,265 high risk referrals to MARAC, with projections to the end of the fiscal year predicting a 56.7% increase in referrals. The current repeat referral of those high risk cases currently stands at 46.61% over a 2 year period, but when looking at 20/21 period only, that figure rises to 51.74%. Doncaster MARAC repeat referrals are currently 10.74% over the Safe Lives national guidance for MARACs of between 23% and 41%. The current MARAC cases nationally for 12 months ending 31 December was 32% which was an increase of 1% on the previous year and therefore Doncaster is currently 19.74% above the national average.

The DAN role is both innovative and successful, with families engaged from November 2019, only having between a 0%-1% repeat referral within a 12 month period. However, the ability to meet unmet demand with high risk referrals which meet the criteria is impacted by the lack of capacity of the team.

With increased referrals both at Hub and IDVA, which is also evidenced by increases in partner DVA incidents / referrals reveals a sustained growth in domestic abuse across the Borough. When coupling the growth with the high repeat referral rate demonstrates a need for an innovative whole family approach to a wider audience than those which currently meet the DANs criteria. Doncaster is seen unprecedented increase in domestic violence and abuse (DVA) referrals during 2020/21 which professionals believe is largely attributed as the impact of Covid19 lockdowns. When projecting to the end of this financial year it is projected that IDVA will have a 56.7% increase and the Hub a 25.37% in workload. Whilst this is only one organisation, it does provide sufficient evidence that DVA is on the increase within the Borough, particularly cases which require multi agency intervention at MARAC.

Repeat referrals of DVA within 12 months is high with IDVA cases at 46.61% (over a 2 year period) and the Hub at 62.1% (over 11 month period). The reduction of repeat referral with IDVA cases demonstrates the success of partners working more closely with victims and perpetrators to tackle DVA.

Intelligence collated identifies that 57.74% (IDVA) and 75.7% (Hub) of victims identify as having children. Inevitably, children of varying development age ranges witness domestic abuse in the household which evidence shows is likely to have a long term impact on their expected outcomes of health and education. It is also acknowledged that some children who witness DVA are likely to become either a victim or perpetrator in adulthood.

In March 2017, an evaluation of Growing Futures was undertaken which was established in October 2014 to improve the outcomes of families, and particularly children and young people (CYP) who have experienced Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA). The team were originally funded via a grant through the Department for Education Innovation Programme in April 2015 and became operational in September 2015. The project was designed to address significant historic difficulties with multi-agency working and poor levels of trust between services users and services. Its specific aims were:

- To reduce the emotional harm caused by DVA to CYP
 - To directly support recovery of DVA for victims and their children
 - To significantly reduce repeat victimisation
 - To challenge acceptance of DVA among families and the wider community
 - To break the pattern of abuse as it re-presents itself in CYP
- Through grant funding the original complement of staff was 12 Domestic

Abuse Navigators (DANs), 2 Senior DANs and 2 Perpetrator Workers. Through reduction in funding there remains only 1 Service Team Manager DAN and 2 DANs who, due to the reduction in the team, are only able to work with DVA families who meet specific criteria:

- a) High risk domestic abuse incident risk assessed using Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) and referred to MARAC within the last 6 months
- b) Additional complexity for any family member (substance misuse, mental health, learning disability)
- c) Impact on children (can be discussed as this is not always visible)
- d) Open to Children's Social Care for a period of either Children In Need (CIN) or CP planning.

The evaluation completed identified that there has been a widespread culture of acceptance of DVA among local communities in Doncaster as well as a considerable antipathy toward local services. It also found that in some cases, the introduction of the new model of working, particularly the new DAN role, enabled a new and more trusting relationship between professionals and DVA victims and families to be forged.

The evaluation also found that the programme of action research with young people also raised awareness of DVA among that group, and encouraged them to challenge the cultural acceptance of DVA in Doncaster.

In August 2018, Cordis Bright was commissioned by the DfE to work with the Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST) to provide a follow up to evaluate the Growing Futures project, its key findings were:

1. The whole family model of working was underpinned by the role of DANs whose intensive work with the whole family was viewed as important to building lasting relationships and helping to overcome entrenched behaviours which resulted in DA

2. An initial reduction of 12 DANs to 4 wasn't found to be problematic at that time as it was felt that they were still able to provide high levels of support to the families they worked with, although it was acknowledged that the reduced DANs would not provide them with the capacity to offer support to Medium and Standard Risk victims and families.
3. Increased wellbeing and resilience for children and families
4. Greater stability for children
5. Reduction in the number of children admitted to care as a result of DVA
6. Reduced risk for children
7. Reduced repeat referrals for those families with whom DANs worked and a reduction of repeat cases to MARAC

The establishment of a DANs team in Doncaster is innovative. This type of holistic whole, integrated family approach to DVA does not exist in any other Authority area in the United Kingdom. The DAN Service Team Manager are often invited to deliver presentations at national conferences on the whole family approach.

As mentioned in Section 2, the current DAN establishment consists of 2 FTE DANs and 1 FTE DAN Service Team Manager who manages the DANs.

The DAN Service success centre around reduction in DA risk which is evidenced by a decreased risk assessment using DASH. In addition, a reduction in vulnerability for children from CP to CIN (Children in Need), early help or de-planned and improved awareness and safety within the family unit.

In the period November 2019 to November 2020, the DAN service supported 44 families, consisting of 65 adults and 99 children. Although the DANs is a non-statutory service, 100% of the families referred to the service engaged with the DANs. They have worked with this number of families, even though the team has had reduced capacity through long term sickness and annual leave.

Some families who have been supported by the DANs team have reported significant benefits, including the feeling of being listened to, advice and support provided where needed and greater continuity with the professional they work with which built successful trusting relationships with their DAN.

A significant achievement of the DANs team is the success with repeat referrals. Whilst IDVA and the Hub repeat referrals are significantly high, the repeat referral rate for families working with DANs are between 0% and 1%, even when Children's Social Care are working with the families the repeat referral rate falls between 9% and 26% for the same period. This success also has correlations with reducing the number of children who have to be moved from the parental home because of DVA and therefore a significant cost saving.

The DAN service continue to offer specialist advice and support to professionals, particularly around case discussions. In addition the DAN Service Team Manager and her team have provided training to 99 local professionals. In addition, in conjunction with the Community Safety Partnership the DAN team Manager delivers:

- Impact on Children of Domestic Abuse
- Young People and Domestic Abuse
- Stalking and Harassment

The DANs team also deliver training to foster carers in addition the following lunchtime seminars

- An overview of the Typologies of DA
- Engaging the Abusive Parent
- Why Don't They Just Leave
- An Introduction to Getting On Programme

Recently, the DANs team are expanding the DA Champion role across the DCST to further integrate good practice thinking in relation to DA across the organisation. Increased capacity would help to integrate across the partnership

DVA in Doncaster Borough is significantly increasing which is causing latent demand in the system which requires DAN capacity. Colleagues in the IDVA team report not referring all of the cases which meet the stringent criteria because they are aware of the lack of capacity for the current complement of DANs to work closely with families.

With the increased cases at IDVA and the Hub, there is a need to think innovatively on how DANs learning and practices could be widened to reach a greater cohort of families impacted by DVA, particularly those assessed as medium and standard to prevent escalation and repeat referrals to the Hub and IDVA.

With the reduction in the numbers of DANs, only 5 of the 12 activities identified in the original project are currently being undertaken. There is currently insufficient resources to be able to provide support to more families with the existing staffing establishment, even those who meet the existing criteria. One of the greatest areas which the team are not able to focus on is the wider work with perpetrators and victims to provide peer support and increased awareness in communities.

3. Options Appraisal (including Financial Impact)

Option 1 – 2 FTE Domestic Abuse Navigators (G9) - Annual Cost £83,738.81
This will increase capacity to work with additional 44 families (around 100 children) experiencing high risk domestic abuse and support their recovery either separately or together. The ability to continue to contribute to the delivery of both Caring Dads and Getting On (teen to parent abuse programme) and the future delivery of the One of a Kind children's group work programme into schools will be secure, this work is currently at risk given the DANs service capacity. Thus increasing the reach of the DAN's service to families who experience domestic abuse at all levels of risk, including those who experience teen to parent abuse and those whose children have been exposed to domestic abuse. The cost avoidance for the system and for external agencies includes a reduction in the number of children entering care, a reduction in the re-referral rate to Children's Social Care, a reduction in reoffending behaviour and a reduction in the need for therapeutic support services. In addition the long term representation of the cycle of abuse including as a pattern in the relationship, in subsequent relationships and in the intergenerational transmission of domestic abuse produces a potential cost saving for all services.

Option 2 – 2 FTE DAN, 1 FTE Hybrid Community Co-ordinator/Perp Worker (G8) and 1 FTE Business Support (G5) – Annual Cost £141,449.72

As above plus:

The development of a new role in community engagement to develop relationships with the wider community including community groups, faith groups, women's groups, LGBTQ, sports and running clubs, gyms and any other relevant community venues to develop their understanding of the prevalence of domestic abuse in Doncaster and the training that is available. This role will also develop a network of DA Champions within the community that will come together regularly to discuss issues in relation to domestic abuse and support the champions in becoming points of contact within their communities for people that experience

domestic abuse or that use abusive behaviours. This role will link with the local solutions groups currently running across Doncaster. The role will also develop a programme to support families experiencing situational violence who wish to stay together. It will also work with some people that cause harm. This role has the potential to hugely impact on reach, right into the hearts of our communities where domestic abuse is often hidden and widely accepted. It raises awareness, provides the training to deal with disclosures and challenges the acceptance. As a result, this role will include working with victims and people that harm in developing peer support options either as one to one mentoring support or more structured groups dependent upon identified need.

A full time business support assistant will provide support for DAN's in terms of current admin duties, uploading of documents to Liquid Logic (LL), room bookings for all programmes, refreshment bookings, handling invoices, keeping spread sheets and monitoring information up to date, uploading suitability assessments to files and recording on LL attendance at all programmes. This will increase the DAN's capacity to work directly with more families by 10%. In addition, it will free up additional capacity for the Team Manager to continue to develop the whole family model to include a toolkit and training package for 'Effective Whole Family Working' to support professionals in Doncaster to embed the whole family approach and as a saleable package to other local authorities who are interested in the model.

The DAN Team Manager has recently attended a year-long project run by Research in Practice to change the way that local authorities respond to Domestic Abuse, Doncaster was asked to present during this project and highlighted as an area of best practice, subsequently generating a significant interest in the model. The DAN Team Manager is also looking to link with Community Safety Partnerships and Local Authorities to promote the teen to parent abuse programme Getting On. Rotherham Borough Council have recently purchased the train the trainer package for this programme, generating income to support the service. It is expected that the Team Manager could generate further income to meet the current demand with the additional capacity provided through the additional DANs and Business Support.

Option 3 – 4 FTE DAN (G9), 1FTE Business Support (G5), 1 FTE Hybrid Perpetrator Worker/Community Co-ordinator (G8), 1 FTE Perpetrator Worker (G8)
- Annual Cost: £225,188.53

As Option 1 and 2 plus:

Four full time DANs would allow the service to increase capacity four fold meaning that the service could work with an additional 88 families including 198 children and 130 adults. In addition it would add capacity to the current delivery capability for Getting On, Caring Dads and the One of a Kind children's group work programme, allowing these programmes to operate on a rolling basis meaning an increase in the number of families that can receive support. The inclusion of a dedicated worker for the person causing harm would enable the service to deliver short solution focused intervention sessions to the people causing harm who have children. This dedicated role could work with 50 people causing harm over the year.

Please see Option 2 for the community coordinator role which is replicated for this option.

Please see Option 2 for the full time business support equivalent which is replicated for this option.

3.2 Potential Cost Avoidance

The service can identify 13 children who are likely to have entered care proceedings without DAN service intervention.

The ages of those children are as follows:

- 14
- 13
- 12 x 2
- 10 x 2
- 7
- 6 x 2
- 5
- 4
- 3
- 1

The associated cost for each child would be dependent upon placement arrangements and include the cost of care proceedings per family (4 families in this case). Dependent upon the placement arrangements (in-house fostering, external fostering, and care home) the cost increases per year. The cost avoidance that the DAN service have therefore contributed to in the last 12-18 months are significant. It is estimated that if those 13 children and young people had been removed, the cost avoidance calculates between £177,372 to £547,859 based upon the average in-house and external foster carers. This figure does not take into account the cost avoidance for residential care or the cost of court proceedings.

While only the Trust partial costs are quantified, other organisations and teams will also realise cost avoidance from this work where repeat referrals are significantly reduced e.g.:

- the police not having to respond to repeat incidents
- attendance and treatment at A&E
- reduction in the need and cost for mental health services
- reduction at MARAC for multi agencies discussions and mitigations
- reduction of criminal justice costs for bring a perpetrator to justice
- reduction of housing options and costs due to families being kept together
- reduction of IDVA time
- Training of professionals from different organisations enables a whole family approach to be embedded which reduces the repeat referral rate
- By extending the reach there will be fewer escalations to MARAC thus reducing costs
- e.t.c

BOX 4 BACKGROUND PAPERS

NO

BOX 5

**INFORMATION NOT FOR PUBLICATION:
To be published in full redacting signatures only**

Name: Kaye Rushbrook Signature: [REDACTED] Date 20.05.2021

Signature of FOI Lead Officer for service area where ODR originates

BOX 6

AUTHORISATION:

Name: Lee Golze Signature: [REDACTED] Date: 28.05.2021

Assistant Director of Learning Opportunities for Children and Young People

Does this decision require authorisation by the Chief Financial Officer or other Officer?

NO

If yes please authorise below:

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Chief Executive/Director/Assistant Director of _____

Consultation with Relevant Member(s)

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Designation _____

(e.g. Mayor, Cabinet Member or Committee Chair/Vice-Chair)

Declaration of Interest NO

If YES please give details below:

N/A

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It is the responsibility of the decision taker to clearly identify any information that is confidential or exempt and should be redacted before publication.