

## **Northampton Borough Council**

### **Northampton Women's Forum**

**Tuesday, 3 December 2019**

**Officers at the meeting**

**WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

#### **MINUTES**

### **3. PROVISION FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE - FIONA CAMPBELL (VOICE) AND RACHEL DUNCAN (NDAS)**

In 2014 the then PCC Adam Simmonds had a vision of a one stop shop for victims. A contract was originally awarded to Victim Support for 3years. Voice was then set up as a limited company. The aims are:-

- Ensuring the victim was at the centre
- Single point of contact
- Signposting
- Continuity of care and support
- Helping victim to cope, recover and thrive.

The different strands of support were:-

- Adult victims and witnesses
- Children and young people
- Road harm – anyone affected by a road traffic collision
- Restorative justice

Voice gave support to

- any resident aged 6 or over,
- resident within Northamptonshire who was a victim of crime, persistent asb or serious life changing fire incident
- witnesses of crime that was going through the Court system
- reported or unreported to the police
- no time limitation

Exclusions were:-

- anyone aged under 6 years old
- not resident within Northamptonshire
- homicide, rape

- institutionalised (HMP/Care)

During an average month Voice received 3,500 referrals for the county.

Sunflower was now part of Voice and they provided immediate support for victims of domestic abuse scoring 14 or more on the DASH or otherwise considered high risk. They had a hospital IDVA (independent domestic violence adviser) and a Stalking IDVA had recently completed their training. From Q2 2018/19 to Q2 2019/20 there had been a 87.11% increase in referrals. During Q2 2019/20 there had been 700 referrals to IDVA/HIDVA, 335 referrals into MARAC with 293 cases being heard.

Stats for Voice, q2 July – September 2019

- 10,799 referrals across adult, cyp, road hard and Restorative Justice.
- 79.56% contacted within 72 hours
- 31.79% referrals received were DA related
- Approx. 4.2% accepted immediate, practical or ongoing support
- 929 support sessions held
- 80.52% reported better able to cope
- 80.52% reported improved feeling of safety
- 83.85% witness attendance

Voice also had 2 facilities across the county for video link in extreme cases so that victims did not have to attend court in person. CPS did the applications to court for video links.

OPCC funding

£142k for Sunflower – high risk DA victims

£200k – Voice to support medium level risk DA victims

£50k for PIPA – Prevent Intimate Partner Abuse – a programme run by NDAS

£30k – Intensive programme for high risk perpetrators

£5k – campaign to promote an environment for support that people can recognise – it was thought this was the #cutitout campaign launched recently to give hairdressers/barbers/beauticians the skills to recognise and signpost victims of DA that may disclose to them. The launch was attended by approximately 150 people. MW stated the issues had come up as victims referred to agencies by community groups were not getting a good response and felt they were being pushed from pillar to post.

For those reporting crimes, Voice now had a data controller with the police and would make every effort to make contact with victims. Agreements had been made with EMAS, NGH and KGH for people that disclosed so Voice could make contact. Funding for Sunflower had not kept pace and no increase had been asked for to funders for the last 10 years. Funding at the same rate had been secured for the next year but the door had also been left open to ask for more and this was currently being worked on.

RD stated that the level of service was dictated by the level of funding. NDAS had

been working at a deficit of £275k last year and they had to dig into reserves. This year would be similar. However, the Board had agreed to recruit another advice worker as they were so busy they could barely answer the phone. If a victim had plucked up the courage to contact them and they didn't have the resources to answer the phone, it was unlikely they would try again. RD was trying to get enough capacity to retain their reputation as it was vitally important to get the confidence of victims.

Eve did not get funded as they were a Christian organisation even though they were open to all and raised their own funds.

RD stated that it was really difficult to support victims with no recourse to public funds and there were generally a lot of complexities in the cases around language barriers and faith amongst other things. Previously NDAS had done what they could but resources were now so stretched they really couldn't. However, the MHCLG had released some funding for safe access for DA victims and NDAS were looking to do a bid with Eve and could work in support for those with no recourse. The deadline for submission was 20 January. Action: RP put RD in touch with community groups.

RD stated that if anyone knew of any families who were struggling to buy presents for their children to contact NDAS with details of the children's ages and interests if possible.

#### **4. BREAST FRIENDS - AWARD WINNING CHARITY PROVIDING PRACTICAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE AFFECTED BY BREAST CANCER - SALLY WOOD**

SW explained that Breast Friends had been set up by Leonie Heard (previous winner of Inspirational Woman!) as she had found out, after having been diagnosed with breast cancer, that there was little support for those aged 30+. The Charity had been set up to offer peer to peer support. It has a similar ethos to Voice and worked on 3 different levels.

1. Peer to peer support. Private Facebook site where people could talk to others with the same issues. Regular monthly meetings for members with a speaker or activity, currently held at the Dapper Sandwich but currently looking for a larger venue. Hold events and help get people gently back into exercise. Build friendships.

2. Practical support for those going through treatment supplying kit bags with natural products which had been the gateway to forming the Charity.

3. Awareness raising about checking your own body. Breast cancer does not yet affect women, 400 men are diagnosed each year.

Currently have about 200 members – some move on after treatment but lots stay on and help support others and some join the committee and volunteer. They didn't do counselling but do signpost.

#### **5. CONSULTANCY SUPPORT - WITH PARTICULAR INTEREST IN SUPPORTING WOMEN IN BUSINESS - SALLY WOOD**

SW had previously been a finance director for HMV and had not setup a consultancy business and would really like to support women in business. She had joined Federation of Small Businesses who ran a lot of campaigns and did a lot to

support women. Sally had volunteered to help and would bring anything of interest to the Forum.

## **6. COMMUNITY EXCHANGE**

RD reported the #cutitout campaign had been launched. This campaign was a response to the murder in Norfolk where a victim had disclosed to their hairdresser she thought her partner was going to murder her and consequently did. A presentation was delivered by the police and other partners so that they would be able to recognise victims of domestic abuse and signpost them appropriately. About 150 hairdressers, beauticians and barbers had attended the launch event in Northampton. Other events would be rolled out across the county.

NDAS had secured £50k of lottery funding for a pilot scheme with Service 6 and the University around ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) with a trauma informed approach. It was hoped this would open the door for future funding.

Women and transport – JB reported that the University was the UK hub for international research into women and transport. She would be data gathering and the next stage was to set up ‘labs’ to engage with local forums – how women got about/public transport/transport poverty/barriers etc. She wanted to talk to community groups to find out how women accessed transport for work and how it could be sustainable. A parliamentary group wanted to do a white paper on it next year to include affects on women with a disability, different faiths/ethnicity and trans women. RD told how a London train company was trialling a pilot which gave free train journeys to women fleeing domestic abuse to a refuge in a different area.

EL was setting up a Albanian traditional dance group as she wanted young people to learn their traditional culture.

SP stated the police wanted the force to be more representative of the community and were encouraging more women to join.

FW and CJ had set up a Women’s Network Group for staff at St Andrew’s and were looking for items of interest. If anyone had anything to include, please send a link to [forums@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:forums@northampton.gov.uk) who can forward on.

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

MW reported that the 16 Days of Activism was currently underway with agencies going out to local employers, the college and shopping centres with information stands. The consultation for the town centre and Market Square was now on the NBC website. The igloo cinema had free screenings of the Chronicles of Narnia, Paddington’s Christmas and Peter Rabbit’s Christmas. Although the showings were free of charge, they still needed to be booked through this link -

<http://www.thedeco.co.uk/events/>

NC stated the police were doing some personal safety campaigns in the town centre with NBC Community Safety and Operation Lapland had started so more police would be visible in the town centre.

Eve had there symposium coming up on 22 January at Highgate House and the topic was the complexities of domestic abuse and perpetrators. Bookings could be made on Eventbrite – [Eveda.co.uk/symposium](http://Eveda.co.uk/symposium). Please could everyone raise awareness.

DM told the meeting of the event on December 4<sup>th</sup> at Spencer Dallington Community

Centre to celebrate International Day of People with Disabilities.

## **8. NEXT YEAR'S MEETING DATES**

21 January – Holding Room

10 March – Holding Room

26 May – Holding Room

21 July – Holding Room

22 September – Holding Room

24 November – Holding Room

All meetings 11am to 1pm