

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Action Taken Under Delegated Powers

Funding for Domestic Abuse Advocates in 2017-18

1 Summary Statement

- 1.1** Funding of £160k per annum has been provided by SMBC Children's Services to Black Country Women's Aid for 5 Domestic Abuse Advocates (DAAs) posts for a two-year period ending in March 2017. The current arrangements for funding 5 DAAs was based on an earlier pilot where Children's Services provided funding for 2 DAAs for 2012-2014.
- 1.2** A review of the DAAs' work was undertaken to identify the risk and potential impact of the cessation of funding. The review identified a number of options for consideration for 2017-18. In consultation with the relevant Cabinet Members, it was agreed that funding for 3 Domestic Abuse Advocates should be provided for 2017-18 (Option 2 outlined in the review report), subject to the relevant Directors confirming that funding is available. It was also agreed that further work is undertaken to consider the model of domestic abuse support which is required for April 2018 onwards.
- 1.3** The Director of Children's Services has confirmed that funding of £56k is available from Children's Services to fund DAAs in Black Country Women's Aid in 2017-18. The Interim Director of Neighbourhoods has confirmed that there is a total of £40k available from Neighbourhoods to fund DAAs in Black Country Women's Aid in 2017-18. This is a total of £96k from Sandwell MBC for this work in 2017-18.
- 1.4** This is not a key decision.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1** It is recommended that a total of £96k grant funding is provided to Black Country Women's Aid to fund 3 Domestic Abuse Advocates in 2017-18. This will be made up from £56k from Children's Services and £40k from Neighbourhood Services.

In accordance with the authority delegated to Directors to act on matters within the authority delegated to them under Part 3 of the Council's Constitution, I intend to take the action(s) recommended above.

I do not have an interest to declare in this matter


Jim Leivers
Director of Children's Services

Date: 7th March 2017


Ajman Ali
Interim Director of Neighbourhood Services

Date: 7th March 2017

Contact Officers:

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3. Background Details

- 3.1 Funding of £160k per annum has been provided by SMBC Children's Services to Black Country Women's Aid for 5 Domestic Abuse Advocates (DAAs) posts for a two-year period ending in March 2017. The current arrangements for funding 5 DAAs was based on an earlier pilot where Children's Services provided funding for 2 DAAs for 2012-2014.
- 3.2 The DAAs work in the six Community Operating Groups (COGs). They work with domestic abuse victims and their families who have been risk assessed as medium or standard risk of serious harm or homicide, using the DASH (Domestic Abuse Stalking and Honour Based Violence) risk assessment tool. They also work with and support other COGs partners in their work with victims and families to address domestic violence and abuse.
- 3.3 At the request of Chief Officers and the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Protection, a review of the DAAs' work was undertaken to identify the risk and potential impact of the cessation of funding. The review considered performance data from 2015-16 as well as detailed performance on 102 cases closed in October 2016. This identified that 1082 victims of domestic abuse were supported by the DAAs in 2015-16. Feedback from those victims who completed client feedback forms at the end of their period of support was very positive.
- 3.4 The recommendations of the review were discussed with the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Protection; the Cabinet Member for Children's Services; the Interim Director of Neighbourhoods and the Director of Children's Services on 29th February. It was agreed that funding for 3 Domestic Abuse Advocates should be provided for 2017-18, subject to the Directors confirming that funding is available (Option 2 outlined in the review report). It was also agreed that further work is undertaken to consider the model of domestic abuse support which is required for April 2018 onwards.
- 3.5 The Director of Children's Services has confirmed that funding of £56k is available from Children's Services to fund DAAs in

Black Country Women's Aid in 2017-18. The Interim Director of Neighbourhoods has confirmed that there is a total of £40k available from Neighbourhoods to fund DAAs in Black Country Women's Aid in 2017-18. This is a total of £96k from Sandwell MBC for this work in 2017-18. Sandwell MBC will develop and issue a grant agreement to Black Country Women's Aid for this work in 2017-18.

This is not a key decision.

Source Documents

Review of Domestic Abuse Advocates service provided by Black Country Women's Aid – the potential impact of funding ceasing in March 2017.