

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

PCC Scrutiny Progress Report

March 2015

IDVA (Independent Domestic Advisory Service)

General information about IDVA:

The main purpose of independent domestic violence advisors (IDVA) is to address the safety of victims at high risk of harm from intimate partners, ex-partners or family members to secure their safety and the safety of their children. Serving as a victim's primary point of contact, IDVAs normally work with their clients from the point of crisis to assess the level of risk. They also discuss the range of suitable options leading to the creation of a workable safety plan.

They are proactive in implementing the plans, which address immediate safety, including practical steps to protect victims and their children, as well as longer-term solutions. These plans will include actions from the Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) as well as sanctions and remedies available through other organisations. IDVAs support and work over the short to medium term to put victims on the path to long term safety. IDVAs receive specialist accredited training and hold a nationally recognised qualification.

Since they work with the highest risk cases, IDVAs are most effective as part of an IDVA service and within a multi-agency framework. The IDVA's role in all multi-agency settings is to keep the client's perspective and safety at the centre of proceedings.

Studies have shown that when high risk clients engage with an IDVA, there are clear and measurable improvements in safety, including a reduction in the escalation and severity of abuse and a reduction or even cessation in repeat incidents of abuse.

An actual case study from IDVA:

IDVA support

Client suffered DA for many years before accessing IDVA support. The last attack she experienced was sustained and brutal, requiring hospital treatment. Through our IDVA support she has accessed counselling, moved property and had sanctuary works undertaken in her new property – she now feels her and her daughter can settle, feel really secure, stable and happy in their new home. She has also taken the extremely difficult step of supporting prosecution of perpetrator, to help ease this distress we arranged pre-court visit and put special measures in place so she could give evidence via video link and have supported her throughout the whole court process. She said that without IDVA support she could never have done what she has, she knew we were there with her at all times and she said it seemed like whenever she was at her lowest ebb we always rang and gave her the strength to carry on. She knows she has some way to go to deal with what has happened to her but she also knows she will deal with it and have a future she can cherish with her family and friends.

Figures from April 2014 to end of February 2015:

There were 223 customer who were supported by IDVA between April 2014-Feb 2015

ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour)

Ambassadors programme

ASDAN – AWARD SCHEME DEVELOPMENT AND ACCREDITATION NETWORK provides educational opportunities for young people, helping them to develop their personal and social attributes through this award.

These courses are vocational in nature and are mainly aimed at students between 11-25 years old. They aim to develop skills of young people who have struggled in academic subjects.

Within The ASB Ambassadors programme the key areas of the programme will be focused around issue based work on risk taking behaviour encompassing issues such as Substance misuse, Self-analysis of actions and consequences, Relationships and Social impact of anti-social behaviour.

The following outlines the ten week programme currently taken place in Freeborough, Hillsvie and Redcar Academy secondary schools involving 60 year 7-9 aged 11-13year olds.

Week 1

Rule setting/ introduction / ice breakers / all about me game and defining the role of an ambassador and overview of risk taking behaviour.

Week 2

Anti-social behaviour process and its impacts

Week 3

Smoking session -What does it do to our health?

Week 4

Drugs session, different types and there impacts – Leigh Betts story-

CREST coming in with the drug box, overcoming myths

Week 5

Fire session. - Cleveland Fire Brigade highlighting the dangers of fires, hoax calls and setting of fire alarms in schools.

Week 6

Sexual Health session - Looking at risk taking behaviour, contra-pack, work around relationships and legal myths

Week 7

Bullying and Internet Safety session - How to keep safe, different types of cyber bullying – Ashley Hall story

Week 8

Alcohol session - Impact of alcohol on young person's body, legal myths, speaker from CREST

Week 9

Police & Criminal Justice System session - Guest speaker from the police to discuss what the implications are once a young person is in the system.

Week 10

Visit to Police Headquarters at Ladgate Lane and seeing how the control room works, impact of hoax 999 calls.

Week 11

Complete the ASDAN BOOKLET and fun session Tenpin bowling at Teesside Park

Stay Safe Scheme

The Stay Safe scheme identifies vulnerable youngsters out on the streets on Friday and Saturday nights, and has recently been re-launched. Through a multi-agency approach, youngsters are then removed from the situation into safety, until a parent /guardian is called.

Community Mediation Pilot Programme

Up to 2005, RCBC procured the services of Unite Limited to provide a Community Mediation programme within the Borough. The anti-social behaviour officers have for a number of years highlighted that this has been a loss in service provision offered to residents involved in anti-social behaviour occurrences.

During quarters 3 and 4 of 2014/15, Unite have been providing a high quality accredited independent and impartial community mediation pilot service to residents of any tenure (i.e. owner occupier, private rented and social housing) in the borough of Redcar and Cleveland. The three ASB Officers in the borough have been nominated as designated referrers to the service to ensure that the 20 referrals available, as part of the pilot, were effectively used within the borough. At the time of writing this report, 9 referrals have been received. A deadline of 30th April 2015 has been agreed as the final date referrals can be received

Community mediation is a very effective intervention that empowers local residents to resolve issues in their local communities, such as noise, anti-social behaviour, lifestyle differences and property based disputes. ONE Awards (formally Open College Network) accredited, experienced and supervised mediators meet with residents separately, in their own homes, in the first instance, to hear each parties' issues and how they are affected by the conflict. The mediator(s) also prepare each party, at this initial one-to-one appointment, for what they may hear from the other parties' perspective; this is to encourage parties to think in 'the other person's shoes'. The

mediator(s) also starts a problem solving process to encourage parties to think about what solutions the parties in dispute can come up with themselves together for the future. All parties involved in the dispute are invited to a joint meeting at a local neutral venue, arranged and financed by Unite. At the joint meeting all parties are encouraged to participate in uninterrupted time and identifying options and solutions for the future. The aim of the joint meeting is to help parties reach a win/win outcome. The mediator(s) help the parties reach a workable and realistic written SMART agreement. A copy of the agreement is sent to the referrer (i.e. the ASB Officer), subject to client confidentiality.

The pilot programme has represented an opportunity to assess the demand, impact and evaluation of mediation intervention. It has also provided the anti-social behaviour team with Level 3 Mediation Skills qualifications which will be beneficial in their wider work role.

Final evaluation report will be compiled in May 2015.

Report prepared by Val Mitchell (Stronger Communities Manager)

March 2015