

## **CABINET**

**27 NOVEMBER 2012**

### **UPDATE ON DOMESTIC ABUSE**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mike O'Brien, Community Safety and Customer Contact

Report from: Robin Cooper, Director, Regeneration, Community and Culture

Author: Tim England, Head of Safer Communities

#### **Summary**

The responsibility for co-ordinating the council and its partners' work around domestic abuse passed from the Assistant Director Housing and Corporate Services to the Assistant Director for Frontline Services in January 2012.

A report was made to Cabinet on 15 May 2012 on the work undertaken since January and on the way forward.

This report seeks to update Cabinet on progress since May.

#### **1 Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1 Reducing domestic abuse and minimising its impact on families and children is a priority for Medway's Community Safety Partnership and Medway Safeguarding Children's Board (part of the Children's Trust arrangements). There is multi-agency commitment to the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2010 - 2013 which has the following priorities:
- Reduce domestic abuse and change attitudes
  - Provide support for victims of domestic abuse
  - Protect victims of domestic abuse
  - Improve multi agency working, including information sharing.

#### **2 Background**

- 2.1 Domestic abuse covers incidents of threatening or violent behaviour or abuse between adults (usually partners or family members). This covers a wide spectrum of incidents but affects millions of people, spanning 15 per cent of all violent incidents and claiming the lives of around two women a week.
- 2.2 Domestic abuse is rarely a one-off, and often forms a continuing pattern of behaviour by one adult towards another. The vast majority of cases are

violence by men against women, but there are cases of same-sex domestic violence, and violence by women against men.

- 2.3 Local authorities play a significant role in supporting victims of domestic abuse and taking pro-active steps to prevent domestic abuse, particularly in the context of their housing management functions by:
- challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it;
  - providing adequate support where violence does occur;
  - working in partnership to obtain the best outcome for victims and their families;
  - Working in partnership to reduce the risk to victims of these crimes and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

### **3 Progress**

#### **3.1 CSP subgroup**

3.2 It is important that Medway Council and its partners play their part in pan-Kent arrangements, where it is efficient to do so, and it maximises outcomes for children and families. It is equally important, where a Medway- specific and targeted approach is required, that all partners work together locally to deliver those outcomes.

3.3 The Community Safety Partnership has established a subgroup to lead on the delivery of Medway's response. The sub-group reports on progress to Medway Safeguarding Children's Board.

3.4 The sub-group comprises senior representatives from the Police, Children's Services, Housing Services, NHS, Public Health, the Kent & Medway Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator, Court Service, Probation and the Chair of the MDAF (Medway Domestic Abuse Forum). The two main providers of Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) services to Medway Council, Medway Consumer Advice Bureau (MCAB) and Kent Domestic Abuse Support And Help (K-DASH) also have representatives on the group.

3.5 An initial meeting of the subgroup was held on 18 April 2012 and has met every other month since then. The last meeting was held on 15 October 2012. Medway Safeguarding Children's Board has provided a part time co-ordinator, who links with the Kent and Medway Domestic Violence Co-ordinator. This role is due to be reviewed shortly.

#### **3.6 Co-ordination with Kent County Council**

3.7 The Assistant Director, Frontline Services attends the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy Group meetings and sits on the executive of that group.

#### **3.8 Domestic homicide reviews**

3.9 Community Safety partnerships became responsible for undertaking multi-agency reviews where domestic violence had culminated in a death, from April 2011. Medway and Kent have a joint arrangement in place to discharge this duty. To date there have been nine domestic homicide cases that have been, or are in the process of being, the subject of domestic homicide

- reviews. Two incidents involving domestic homicides occurred last year in Medway, resulting in the deaths of four people, including one child.
- 3.10 One Medway review has been through the Home Office quality assurance process, the other is in the process of being finalised, prior to submission to the Home Office. The remainder of the reviews involve deaths in Kent; however lessons learned will be shared with Medway agencies.
- 3.11 The CSP and Safeguarding Children's Board are exploring how the lessons learned from domestic homicide reviews and serious case reviews can be best disseminated and shared.
- 3.12 Raising awareness of domestic abuse**
- 3.13 A half-day training package has been developed for front line staff to enhance their awareness of domestic abuse and enable them to signpost victims on to support services. A full day package has also been developed for staff with more day-to-day contact with families.
- 3.14 Medway Council's Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy is being revised and the subgroup has been consulted and fed back, with good practice from partner agencies being shared.
- 3.15 The Kent and Medway domestic abuse support website has been developed to provide advice and information on services for victims, friends & family, and perpetrators of domestic abuse. The site is currently live, but will be formally launched on Wednesday, 28 November 2012 and can be found at <http://www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk/>
- 3.16 Action plan refresh**
- 3.17 At the meeting of 29 November 2011, Cabinet considered a report from the Chief Executive containing an action plan for taking forward areas that were highlighted by the domestic advice review as being of high priority.
- 3.18 This action plan has been reviewed and refined. Progress is tracked through the subgroup, which is accountable to the Community Safety Partnership. A copy of the plan is attached as Appendix One.
- 3.19 IDVA provision**
- 3.20 There are a number of agencies working across Kent and Medway that provide IDVAs to support high-risk victims of domestic abuse.
- 3.21 Medway Housing commissions an IDVA from MCAB to support its clients and to ensure that victims of domestic abuse are identified and provided with advice and support at an early stage.
- 3.22 There is now an IDVA, commissioned through K-DASH, working for two hours per day, four days a week in the Accident & Emergency Department at Medway Maritime Hospital.
- 3.23 In addition, in September 2011 a specialist domestic violence court was set up in Medway to cover the North Kent bench area. This is partly funded by Medway Council and provides victims of domestic abuse with access to an

IDVA, who supports victims through the court process and to ensure that they remain safe with appropriate support.

3.24 Medway remains poorly resourced in terms of IDVA provision per high-risk victim. The Kent and Medway IDVA Task and Finish Group was formed with the purpose of establishing sustainable IDVA, including Court IDVA, provision across Kent and Medway. The task group has now disbanded, following publication of an analysis of needs across Kent and Medway, and the group's report and recommendations. The report has been considered at the Kent strategic CSP, who support the recommendation to have a single commissioning framework for IDVA provision across the wide area.

3.25 Medway's Domestic Abuse Subgroup has discussed the report and will recommend that Medway CSP adopt the same approach to IDVA provision.

### 3.26 Refuges

3.27 Supporting People services are the legacy of a former government programme that funded housing-related support services to help vulnerable people live independently. A small amount of money continues to be available for women's refuges, of which there are two in Medway. Refuges operate nationally on a mutual aid basis. There is a small task group examining future commissioning of these services.

### 3.28 Finances

3.29 Responsibilities were transferred to Frontline Services from 1 January 2012. Discussions remain ongoing to explore future options for funding the co-ordination and service elements.

## 4 Risk management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Failure to deliver the priorities set out in the Kent & Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy or the improvement plan being developed.	Failure to deliver the targeted priorities or the improvement plan which highlights the areas identified could mean an increase in the numbers of victims of domestic abuse in Medway with the consequent risks of family breakdown, child protection issues, potential homelessness and health related issues.	Ensure that the improvement plan and KMDA Strategy are regularly monitored by the Sub-group and progress is reported to the CSP, Medway Safeguarding Children's Board and Children's Trust.

## 5 Financial and legal implications

5.1 There are no financial or legal implications arising directly from this report.

## 6 Recommendations

6.1 That Members note the contents of the report and request that progress is reported to Cabinet every 12 months.

**7. Suggested reasons for decision(s)**

- 7.1 To ensure that domestic abuse and the consequent issues it raises are given a clear focus within Medway and that the Cabinet can be assured that progress is being made.

**Lead officer contact**

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**Background papers**

None



**Medway Domestic Abuse Subgroup**  
**Action and improvement plan 2012/2013**

	Qtr 4 2011/12	Qtr 1 2012/13	Qtr 2 2012/13	Qtr 3 2012/13	Qtr 4 2012/13	Qtr 1 2013/14
Number of DA incidents in Medway	1135	1126	1221			
% Female victims	80.7%	78.9%	76.4%			
% Male Victims	19.3%	21.1%	23.6%			
Number of repeat victims (victim more than once in preceding 12 months)	226	386	285			
% of repeat victims of DA in preceding 12 months	19.9%	34.3%	23.3%			
% of repeat incidents of DA	48.9%	47.4%	45.5%			
Number of cases seen at MARAC	79	81	71			
% of repeat victims seen at MARAC	27.9%	23.5%	33.8%			
% of families where a child is subject to a child protection plan where DA was a component	38%	31%	33%			
Number of clients seen at One Stop Shop	54	28				

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<b>Reduce domestic abuse and change attitudes</b>							
Increase knowledge and understanding of impact of domestic abuse across communities and agencies highlighting the fact that it is everyone's responsibility whilst emphasising the effectiveness of early identification and intervention.							
1.	<b>Identified improvement area: What do we intend to achieve? Include any specific numeric targets.</b>						
	Improve knowledge and understanding by delivering regular multi agency awareness events and training activities across Medway; and ensuring agencies and organisations across Medway have access to either multi agency events or in house training.						
1.1	Establish minimum standards of domestic abuse training competency framework in line with the Kent and Medway competency framework.  November 2012	Medway Domestic abuse subgroup (MDAS) (Competency framework to be established by the Kent and Medway Domestic abuse training subgroup)	Quality assure partner agency training programmes to ensure they are compliant with the framework. Post course evaluations will highlight specific learning supported by the framework.	Sufficient numbers of Medway professionals need to be trained to deliver training, so each partner agency to nominate an appropriate member of staff to undergo training.	A workshop was held in August to establish the levels of DA training required for different groups of staff. This workshop also considered which job roles fall into different groups. After a further meeting in September proposals were presented to the Kent and	Implementations measures need to be established.  Agencies need to nominate representatives who will be able to develop and deliver DA training with their agency. They will be invited to attend a briefing session in December 2012.	



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					Medway DA Strategy Group for agreement.		
1.2	Establish a multi agency training matrix for 2012/2013 And explore alternatives means of learning and development.  December 2012	MDAS	Number of multi agency training opportunities available. Attendance numbers and range of attendees from different agencies.	Limited availability of Medway based trainers.	As part of the work detailed above the, a trainer's workshop will be established for partners to nominate appropriate trainers to train DA within their organisations.		
1.3	Launch of the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse website  November 2012	Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Operational group and Strategy Group, Executive.  MDAS	Number of website views on specific section.  Links to website are given on partner agency sites.		The website is now live for professionals, with a formal launch for the public planned for November28th once the Police Commissioner has been elected.	Medway agencies will need to identify a communication plan to ensure all Medway professionals and residents are aware of the website.	

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1.4	Domestic abuse event to raise awareness of DA and new stalking and forced marriage legislation. (Subject TBC)  November 2012	Medway Domestic Abuse Forum (MDAF)	Evaluation form of the day.  Feedback from participants.	Cost implications.	The Medway Safeguarding Children Board will include these topics in their annual conference workshop option, October 2012.	New Stalking laws come into effect on Nov 25 <sup>th</sup> 2012. A communication should be prepared to inform partners via MDAS.	The workshop at the MSCB was used for delegates to identify what they felt a good service would look like and to identify what they felt to be gaps in service. A report of these discussions will be presented to MDAS Dec 12
1.5	Promote awareness of domestic abuse within the workplace. Through implementation for policy and visible contact information. End of 2012/13	MDAS Partner agencies both statutory and private.	Audit of agencies that have policy in place.  Staff awareness of existing policy to be recorded in supervisions.	Monitoring private sector.	Medway Council policy was reviewed at the October MDAS meeting and feedback given.	Kent Police will present their policy at the Dec MDAS.	
1.6	Develop a	MDAS	Progression of				

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	communications plan to support the delivery of all elements of the action plan.  Ongoing		action plan.				
2.	<b>Identified improvement area:</b> Work to ensure that children and young people have a greater understanding and awareness of domestic abuse and the support that is available e.g. through school based awareness raising programmes.						
2.1	Establish young people's attitude towards relationships and domestic abuse using Medway Youth Parliament and survey.  October 2012	Medway DA development officer  Partners to engage with: Medway Youth Parliament  Medway Schools	Number of responses collated.	Widespread engagement with young people may be limited through using groups already engaged, the use of social networking should facilitate messages reaching a wider audience.	A medway school has agreed that their sixth form students will write a survey to establish attitudes to relationships Jan 2013		
2.2	Promote the delivery of domestic abuse awareness work to	Medway DA development officer	% of Medway schools initiating DA training for students.	Cost implications for full programmes from external	Canterbury Christchurch University have undertaken	One of the recommendations from the report is "Commissioners	

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	<p>young people in school or community settings. To include “healthy relationship” training to support and enable young people to develop strategies around self protection from DA.</p> <p>October 2012</p>	<p>Partners to engage with: Medway Schools</p> <p>Community teams e.g. children’s centre</p> <p>Medway Youth Trust (Connexions)</p> <p>Additional needs services e.g. learning disability team</p>	<p>Establishing a baseline of knowledge at the beginning of the programmes and evaluation at the end of programmes.</p>	<p>providers. Lesson time in schools is restricted.</p>	<p>some evaluation work on the programmes available for adolescents in Kent and Medway, the report is now available and a work group has convened to look at how to take the findings forward.</p>	<p>to look at the issue of consistent provision of services across Kent and Medway, for example current limited provision in Medway “</p> <p>A medway school has agreed to pilot a PHSE lesson addressing healthy relationships and domestic abuse based on the existing programmes available. Development will begin January 2012.</p>	
2.3	Provide head	Medway DA	Posters are noted	Cost implications			

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	teachers with materials to display in schools on DA, Honour based violence, forced marriage and FGM.  October 2012	development officer  Partners to engage with: Education safeguarding lead  School nurses	as part of safeguarding visits.	of supply of posters, but schools can be sent PDFs to print and display.			
2.4	Raise the profile of partner violence in adolescence through the use of a youth prevention campaign to tackle teenage relationship violence.  October 2012	Medway DA development officer  Partners to engage with: Medway schools  Youth services e.g. Medway Youth Trust, Youth Offender Team	Increased number of young people accessing DA services or advice within school. However there is no base line data for comparison.	A Medway focused campaign would have cost implications. Promoting national campaigns such as "This is Abuse" would limit costs. However, there are limited child and young people specific services are available in			

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	Action deadline			Medway.			
<b>Provide support to victims of domestic abuse</b>							
Work in partnership to meet the needs of victims and their children of domestic abuse and enable access to specialist support, to reduce repeat victimisation and increase confidence in reporting.							
3	<b>Identified improvement area:</b> Enable victims to access the appropriate support and information across Medway (and Kent as appropriate)						
3.1	Identify the source of IDVA referrals, capacity of IDVAs, routes of communication between IDVAs and other agencies for cases not seen at MARAC.  October 2012	Medway DA development officer  IDVAs	Number of clients seen by the IDVA.  Number of cases referred to MARAC and other agencies.	Funding for the IDVAs is limited and in some cases temporary.	Medway have 3 IDAVS A&E IDVA Court IDVA Housing IDVA or have access to the IDVAs from KDASH. The report from the seconded Medway DA development officer due to be presented at MDAS in December 2012 addresses the work of IDVAs in Medway.  Following a		

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					commissioning report of Kent and Medway IDVA provision, a framework for joint commissioning if IDVAs is under review.		
3.2	IDVAs receive appropriate supervision and access to multi agency training opportunities, which should include safeguarding children and adults.  DATE TBC	MDAS	Number of training opportunities attended by IDVAs.	Possibilities of IDVAs being released for training as some sessions are a day in length.	Following a commissioning report of Kent and Medway IDVA provision, a framework for joint commissioning if IDVAs is under review. This should include training requirements.		
3.3	Establish a database that details the capacity and waiting list/time for services	Medway DA development officer and K&M DA coordinator. MDAF	Creation and publication of services available.	As economic changes threaten services some are inaccessible for clients, and	The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse website lists the services		

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	<p>available in Medway. And establish a process for maintaining.</p> <p>October 2012 and ongoing</p>			<p>some may cease to exist. So data needs to be continuously reviewed and updated especially as capacity changes frequently. MDAS should be informed of services at risk.</p>	<p>available.</p> <p>The report from the seconded Medway DA development officer due to be presented at MDAS in December 2012 addresses the need for a centrally controlled database.</p>		
3.4	<p>Establishing levels of client's information available for analysis from the One Stop Shop. To include monitoring age ranges of children of clients attending.</p>	<p>Medway DA development officer</p> <p>CASA support</p>	<p>Information is provided and recommendations for services can be made.</p>	<p>Information may not be currently available or consistently recorded.</p>	<p>Information provided to the Medway review has highlighted the need for a standardised record template. The report from the seconded Medway DA development</p>		



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	October 2012				officer due to be presented at MDAS in December 2012 addresses this need.		
4	<b>Identified improvement area:</b> Enable children living with or experiencing domestic abuse to be signposted to services for appropriate advice and support						
4.1	Monitor the notification process implemented for health and education from Police (Put in place as per the Ofsted recommendation)  DATE TBC	MDAS	% of children subject to a CAF where DA was a component and initiated by Health/Education  % of notifications sent to Health/Education  Process to monitor effectiveness of response to notifications.	Notifications may be delayed if service is not appropriately prepared to receive.  Volumes of notifications in need of action.	A pilot for Education and Health will start in September 2012, with 5 Medway schools having been identified in wards of high incidents of DA.  The pilot launch was delayed until October 2012 and will run until March 2013		
4.2	Ensure Children in	YOT	Establish that	There may be no			

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	the secure estate receive appropriate support as victims/witnesses and potential perpetrators of DA and education on “healthy relationships”  October 2012	HMYOI Cookham Wood STC	programmes are in place, and how they are evaluated. Examples of lesson plans or information used.	programmes in place, and time in limited due to competing education curriculum. If this is the case a similar programme as seen in schools will be established.			
5	<b>Identified improvement area:</b> Enable victims to stay safely in their own homes should they choose to do so and be supported if they wish to leave, ensuring that appropriate safe accommodation is available to those unable to stay in their own homes.						
5.1	Promote Kent Fire and Rescue service “Safer communities” service, and The Sanctuary Scheme to help victims feel safe in their own homes.  November 2012	MDAF MDAS KFRS	Number of referrals for domestic abuse to KFRS and Sanctuary scheme. With annual increase. Which resulted in positive contact.  Client satisfaction surveys or	Viability of resources for increased number of cliental needs to be confirmed by KFRS and Sanctuary.	The MSCB facilitated an awareness training event in July 2012.  This service is included in DA services website  Monitoring of access to the		

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			feedback.		service has been problematic.		
5.2	Provide safe houses for those in temporary accommodation need as an alternative to a refuge place.  DATE TBC	Housing Services	Establish what is in place and availability.  % use of accommodation		AMAT are willing to provide emergency housing, however strict assessments would need to take place.		
6	<b>Identified improvement area:</b> Identify areas of Medway at high risk of domestic abuse and services available to those areas.						
6.1	Using Police data, the "Medway Troubled Families" Programme and the Medway Safeguarding needs assessment, map Medway in terms of areas at high risk of DA and support targetted services.	Medway DA development officer with Kent Police MYT Medway Council	Publish a comprehensive "Risk area" map and associated support services.	Possible lack of resources in high-risk areas could lead to lack of support for victims. To prevent this DA support services will be asked to identify the areas they are able to cover and MDAS to make	The report from the seconded Medway DA development officer due to be presented at MDAS in December 2012 will include a needs assessment		

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	DATE TBC			recommendation to the allocation of funding for future service planning.			
7	<b>Identified improvement area:</b> Identify families where, along with domestic abuse, there are multiple needs including parental mental health, parental substance misuse, parental disabilities, child disabilities and young carers, and improve access to holistic service support.						
7.1	Publish a Medway Domestic Abuse practice guidance to support agencies that may have identified DA through their assessments.  December 2012	MDAS Medway DA development officer	Publish practice guidance.  Number of professionals reporting to use the guidance.		The Medway DA Development Officer will convene a task and finish group to develop the guidance, initial meeting will take place September 2012.  Practitioner cards with important information have been developed and	A launch of the practitioners cards will be needed to ensure all front line staff are aware of the resource.	

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					printed for frontline staff use.		
7.2	All agencies with frontline staff have professionals trained in the DASH assessment tool.  End 2012/13	MDAS Medway DA development officer	Levels of attendance at DASH training per agency/service.	Limited number of training spaces available and staff not released from duty to attend. Short sessions can be introduced to allow for greater numbers and more date/time opportunities for staff to attend.	The MSCB facilitated a DASH training session in October 2012, another has been planned for January and March 2013.		
7.3	Domestic abuse to be taken into consideration when agencies are carrying out any assessments with their clients.  End 2012/13 Ongoing	Safeguarding lead within agency.	The multi agency case file audit group record that DA is appropriately identified and recorded in files.  Agencies report internal case file	The number of cases seen by the CFAG is limited. Individual agencies will be asked to identify how they audit case files.	Health visitor notes and Midwifery notes are audited for DA, to ensure questions are asked and answers recorded and any necessary		

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	Action deadline						
			audits to MDAS on the inclusion of DA in assessments.		action taken.		
<b>Protect victims of domestic abuse</b> To support victims through the legal system and ensure offenders recognise and understand their behaviour, are held accountable and are encouraged to attend rehabilitation services.							
8	<b>Identified improvement area:</b> Ensure that learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews is disseminated to front line practitioners.						
8.1	Facilitate multi agency “lessons learned” sessions to present DHR findings and recommendations.  Ongoing	Medway Community Safety Partnership MDAS	Event evaluations.		MDAS is awaiting the outcome of a second domestic homicide review currently taking place before facilitating lessons learned training sessions		
9	<b>Identified improvement area:</b> Support for rehabilitation of perpetrators of domestic abuse						
9.1	Develop a 1:1 domestic abuse programme for offenders not	Kent Probation	Number of perpetrators attending and completing the	Availability of 1:1 places.	Sept 2012 – Kent Probation has now introduced its		

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	suitable for IDAP September 2012		programme and not re-offending (for how long?)		Domestic Abuse 121 SAR. Offender managers are being asked to deliver this in supervision with offenders. This is still in the early stages for delivery.		
9.2	Share with partners best practice in the use of integrated offender management (IOM) to tackle domestic violence related offending.	Kent Probation					
9.3	Monitor completion/success rate of IDAP and CDAP programmes and access to the CDAP.  End 2012/13 and	Kent Probation and ST Giles Trust	Number of perpetrators to complete programmes and evaluation of those that do not.  Number of	CDAP places are limited due to funding. Cost of course may cause a barrier.  Due to the nature of the	Sept 2012 - 8 convicted male perpetrators have successfully completed IDAP in the period 1/4/2011 and		

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	ongoing		offenders that do not re-offend within 12 months  Number of children this relates to.	programmes contact ceases after the programme is fulfilled so re-offenders may not be highlighted, or the behaviour may continue or return undetected and unreported.	31/3/2012.		
9.4	Monitor the Prospects for Success programme for female offenders.	Kent Probation					
<b>Multi agency working</b> To continue to improve joint working between agencies, including information sharing, to enable a coordinated approach to addressing domestic abuse.							
10	<b>Identified improvement area:</b> Ensuring the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy is owned and updated.						
10.1	MDAS updates to be fed into KMDASOG Ongoing	Chair MDAS					



Action number	Planning				Monitoring		
	Specific action Action deadline	Accountability Named professional or/and agency with lead responsibility	How will you measure your success against the action and outcome?	Risks identified to achieving the outcome, what risk management is in place?	What progress has been made against the action? Progress date	Addition actions identified in course of achieving outcome	What difference has been made, and evidenced? Has the outcome been achieved?
10.2	Established a process for annual reports of activities, achievements and risk to ongoing operational services.  End 2012/13	MDAS	Identified agencies will be asked to provide annual reports on their activity and future plans for their services in supporting the victims of domestic abuse.	Agencies fail to provide reports.	The report from the seconded Medway DA development officer due to be presented at MDAS in December 2012 addresses the need of standard reporting.		