

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING WITH CABINET MEMBER, HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

7 July 2015

Report of the Strategic Director, Health and Communities

**SV2 COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF RAPE & SEXUAL
ASSAULT**

1. Purpose of the report:

To seek approval for a grant to SV2 of £40,000 for the provision of additional counselling services in order to reduce a significant waiting list for services for victims of rape and sexual assault

2. Information and Analysis:

Support services for victims of rape and sexual violence are primarily delivered by the County's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), which is provided by SV2, a charity with specialist knowledge of these areas of work, under a contract entered into in 2011 at a cost of £190k per annum. Victims in the very north-west end of the county are able to access services at St Marys SARC in Manchester, funded by Derbyshire on a case by case basis. The contract for the Derbyshire SARC is currently hosted by the County Council, but the contract is jointly funded and managed by the County Council, City Council, Derbyshire Constabulary and NHS England. This contract is due to expire on 31 March 2016 when it is expected that responsibility for commissioning and contracting SARCs nationally will transfer to NHS England.

NHS England is developing a national specification for all SARCs in order to bring about consistency of service provision, which includes forensic medical examination, crisis support and ongoing support services from an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser. However, the current specification does not include counselling services, which have to be funded separately and NHS England does not intend to include counselling services in the new specification from 2016. SV2 has used a number of funding streams historically for this provision and most recently has received funding from Hardwick CCG for services for 2015-16 and is working on assessing future needs for counselling in order to secure ongoing funding for this service..

SV2 offers both counselling and psychotherapy from an integrative perspective, based on a person centred foundation, and is client led. It provides expert counselling assessments and therapy to clients with a range of mental health problems, including depression and anxiety disorders, including panic, fear, phobias and post-traumatic stress disorder. Because all clients are different and no one therapeutic approach fits all, SV2 offers an integrative approach.

Since 1 January 2015, SV2 has received 43 referrals for counselling; this number continues to exceed the actual counselling spaces available. High profile police operations such as 'Operation Yewtree' have led to an increase in reporting of historical sexual abuse.

There are 59 clients currently receiving counselling within SV2 from eight subcontracted therapists. seeing 23 of these clients and the remaining 36 are being seen by the two employed therapists (one full time and one part time – 30 hours). However, the waiting list continues to grow, with 154 clients as at 31 March 2015. Whilst Hardwick CCG is providing some funding for the counselling service it is not sufficient to address the waiting list.

Of the 154 clients on the waiting list 55 have waited nine months plus. SV2 would be able to provide services to all the clients waiting six months or more through existing resources (by increasing the number of sessions available) at a cost of approximately £40,000.

A client's length of stay in counselling services does of course vary, but costs have been based on weekly sessions costing £30 per session with some requiring sessions for up to 6 months and on the assumption that some on the waiting list will no longer require the service at all.

3. Human Resources considerations:

Responsibility for appropriately qualified therapists lies with SV2 and the increased sessions can be met by existing sub-contracted therapists.

4. Other considerations:

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: financial, legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, environmental, health, and property and transport considerations.

5. Background papers:

None

6. Key Decision:

No

7. Call-in:

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report? No

8. Officer's recommendation:

That the sum of £40,000 be awarded from the Communities Budget to fund a temporary increase in the number of counselling sessions available to victims of rape and sexual assault via SV2 in order to reduce the waiting time.

**David Lowe
Strategic Director
Health and Communities**