

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING WITH CABINET MEMBER, HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

13 October 2015

Report of the Strategic Director, Health and Communities

SUPPORT VULNERABLE VICTIMS OF BURGLARY PROJECT

1. Purpose of the report:

To consider a request for £25,000 to provide a specialised support service for vulnerable victims of burglary.

2. Information and analysis:

Over recent years levels of burglary have been relatively stable and have remained at low levels across all areas of the county. However, unfortunately over recent months, some areas have seen increases in levels of burglary. There has been an average of 118 dwelling burglaries per month across the administrative county. Chesterfield, Erewash and Amber Valley have the largest number with an average of 24, 20 and 19 per month (figures up to Aug 2015).

Many services which would have supported victims of burglary, such as the Handyvan scheme and the Police Crime Reduction Officers, have been placed under budgetary pressure, meaning that some vulnerable victims of burglary do not receive the levels of care that they need, as they require more support than can be offered from existing services. It is proposed that a support service is developed which could provide help and assistance to vulnerable victims of burglary. This service would be tailored to the needs of the victims to help them to feel safer in their own homes and to be able to protect themselves from future burglaries.

Following a burglary a project worker would visit the victim in their home and provide practical help, advice and support to them. This could include offering emotional support, reassurance and practical advice (e.g. how to deal with and protect themselves from bogus callers / distraction burglaries or sneak in burglaries). Victims could also benefit from target hardening materials such as door / window locks and alarms, door viewers and even burglar alarms where appropriate (e.g. if an alarm could have prevented the burglary from occurring). A combination of some or all of these measures should help to ensure that the victim feels more comfortable and confident to remain in their own home and is not then a target for a future repeat burglary, which statistically is more likely following a burglary.

Victims would be referred into the project in a number of ways. These would generally come via the police officers who attend to investigate the burglary. However, vulnerable people could also be referred from the Handyvan scheme, from the police Persons Susceptible to Harm (PSH) process, the multi-agency

Vulnerable Adults Referral Matrix (VARM) process and/or via other social care routes.

In order for the service to be offered to those most in need, criteria would be developed to identify those who are eligible. This will be developed in more detail as the project is progressed, but it is expected that the criteria will include one or more of the following:

- Aged over 65
- In receipt of DCC social care services
- Low income / in receipt of benefits
- Working with the Troubled Families / MAT teams
- With additional needs (e.g. disabilities / learning difficulties)
- Known to police via the PSH process
- Known to the multi-agency VARM process

The budget should cover approximately 40-60 victims, dependent upon what security measures are required and the amount of officer time that each victim will need. Each victim will have individual needs and the project worker would make an assessment and provide the necessary services on a case by case basis to help the victim to feel safer in their home.

A range of providers will be invited to offer quotes, based on a standardised specification. This would follow the Formal Quotation process and would be advertised through Source Derbyshire, as per the Derbyshire County Council procurement process. It is envisaged that quotations would be received from third sector organisations as well as private organisations, such as housing providers. Any project workers will be employed by the provider that is subsequently selected and not by the County Council.

3. Financial considerations:

This project will be funded from the Communities budget for 2014/15. Any future extension to the project will be dependent on budget availability. Provision of the specialised support services will be procured in accordance with Financial Regulations.

4. Other considerations:

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, human resources, 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 support for vulnerable victims of burglary project is funded, at a cost of £25,000 met from the Communities budget.

**David Lowe
Strategic Director
Health and Communities**