

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING WITH CABINET MEMBER, HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

25 April 2017

Report of the Director of Public Health

COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF RAPE & SEXUAL ASSAULT

1. Purpose of the report:

To seek approval from the Cabinet Member, Health and Communities for a grant of £12,500 to SV2 for the on-going provision of counselling services for victims of rape and sexual assault. This is pending a review of the sexual violence pathway in Derbyshire by statutory agencies/commissioners.

2. Background:

There are currently two providers of Therapeutic Counselling Services who support victims of rape and sexual assault within Derbyshire, SV2 and SAIL.

Current funding arrangements are not sustainable and services are reliant on grant funding. In July 2015, Cabinet Member for Health and Communities approved a grant of £40,000 to SV2 to reduce the waiting list for clients requiring counselling services. In September 2016, Cabinet Member for Health and Communities approved a grant of £81,120 to SV2 to enable the ongoing provision of counselling services until the end of March 2017.

Derbyshire County Council have been working with the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner, NHS England and Clinical Commissioning Groups to assess need and to encourage commissioning and funding of a sustainable service, but discussions are still on-going. Derbyshire County Council Community Safety and Public Health teams continue to offer support and advice to inform this discussion and help partners to find a resolution as a matter of urgency.

Both providers have submitted bids to the Big Lottery to try and secure funding for three years for therapeutic services, but the outcome of these will not be known for approximately three months.

3. Information and Analysis:

SV2 is a charity contracted by NHS England, Derbyshire Constabulary and Derbyshire County Council to provide the county's Sexual Assault

Referral Centre (SARC) service, which provides support for victims of rape and sexual assault in Derbyshire. This support includes crisis worker support, forensic medical services, on-going support from an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor and access to a 24/7 advice line. SV2 also provides a therapeutic counselling service. SV2 operate across the whole of Derbyshire. The Board at SV2 have taken the decision to close their waiting list for counselling services, as they are not currently in a position to meet the needs of any new clients.

NHS England will recommission SARC services in Derbyshire from April 2018, and the specification includes a limited number of counselling sessions per individual. Local areas can supplement the NHS England contracted provision to increase the number of counselling sessions available, subject to the provision of additional funding from partners.

SAIL is a charity, providing free specialist counselling support to women that have experienced childhood sexual abuse and/or incest. The service is available to those living in the north of the County.

The cost of supporting both services until current clients have completed counselling would be £57,500 (£32,500 SV2 and £25,000 SAIL) and it is proposed that this cost be split between Derbyshire County Council (contribution of £12,500), North Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group (contribution of £25,000) and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (contribution of £20,000). In practical terms, the grant from Derbyshire County Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner will go to SV2 and the grant from North Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group will go to SAIL.

4. Human Resources considerations:

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

5. Financial considerations:

The cost of this grant will be met from the 2017/18 Public Health budget.

6. Legal considerations

The Council's standard grant agreement shall be used to set out the terms and conditions for which each grant is made, which provides for clawback of funding in certain circumstances and shall also provide that the Council is not liable for any employment liabilities.

7. Social Value considerations:

Victims of sexual violence can experience many negative consequences. Depending on the individual and their experience this can lead to longer term mental ill health.

Therapeutic Counselling allows victims to process their unanswered questions and unresolved issues, as well as helping to find coping strategies for symptoms they are suffering such as anxiety and flashbacks. Therapy can also help to counteract the effects that abuse might be having on a person's life, such as helping to improve relationships, self-care, and employability.

8. Other considerations:

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

9. Background papers:

Held on file within Economy, Transport and Communities department.
Officer contact details – Christine Flinton extension 38271.

10. Key Decision:

No

11. Call-in:

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

12. Officer's recommendation:

That the Cabinet Member, Health and Communities approves the awarding of a grant of £12,500 to SV2 for the on-going provision of counselling services for victims of rape and sexual assault.

Dean Wallace
Director of Public Health