

Progress under Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Action Plans

Since the publication of the *Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy* a range of actions have been progressed. In the first year, governance and accountability arrangements were put in place to support the implementation of the joint Strategy and subsequent Action Plans. Consideration was also given to the need for practice and legislative changes to improve services. In the second year programmes of work were commenced around identifying key information relevant to service provision, undertaking preparatory work for a range of initiatives, as well as developing and updating protocols and guidance.

All bodies have delivered outcomes in the Year 3 Action Plan. Key highlights are:

- Additional funding to help reduce sexual violence counselling waiting lists with Nexus NI.
- A Domestic Violence and Abuse Disclosure Scheme was introduced on 26 March 2018.
- A Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme has been piloted in Londonderry Magistrates' Court.
- A behavioural change programme has been piloted in the Western Health and Social Care Trust Area for those showing concerning behaviour in a domestic context.
- The launch of new *Guidance for Employers on Developing a Workplace Policy on Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse*.
- Work is ongoing with key voluntary sector stakeholders on the development of a streamlined advocacy support service for victims.
- Research has been completed by the NI Housing Executive relating to accommodation requirements of male victims of domestic violence.
- A new MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) Operational Board has been established and will implement the findings of a MARAC review.
- A draft Domestic Abuse Bill has been prepared, dealing with controlling and coercive behaviour, and will be progressed once a legislative mechanism is available.
- Consultation undertaken on a model for Domestic Homicide Reviews, which will seek opportunities for learning from cases of homicide resulting from domestic violence and abuse.
- Work is progressing on the introduction of Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Orders, to be completed once a legislative mechanism is available.
- Problem solving workshops have been held with key stakeholders to share learning and best practice.
- A pilot programme held in approximately 70 primary schools across Northern Ireland on Preventative Education has been completed.
- Specialist training has been provided for PPS legal staff within Serious Crime Unit and panel counsel.
- Securing a three year contract for the delivery of a 24 Hour Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline.