

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

VIOLENCE MULTI-AGENCY PANEL (VMAP)

1. **Purpose of Report**

To update members on the VMAP pilot and how partners have worked collectively to tackle the perpetrators of violence and support victims (including victims of Domestic Violence) and our future multi-agency approach.

2. **Recommendation**

The Committee is requested to note the report.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS) is the document that details the priorities agreed for Slough with partner organisations. The SJWS has been developed using a comprehensive evidence base that includes the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Central to discharging its responsibility, the Board through regular performance management reports, ensures that the vision and objectives of the Strategy are delivered through the priority actions being led on by each Priority Delivery Group (PDG) such as those described in detail below.

The Safer Slough Partnership seeks to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime. It seeks to reduce the harm that drugs cause to individuals, families and the wider community and create a safer and cleaner environment for all those who live, work, learn, visit and invest in Slough. Therefore the SSP meets the following priorities:

- *Health*
- *Regeneration and Environment*
- *Safer Slough*

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The VMAP initiative can directly influence the following outcomes within the Five Year Plan.

- Slough will be one of the safest places in the Thames Valley
- Children and young people in Slough will be healthy, resilient and have positive life chances

The VMAP delivery will also support Five Year Plan outcomes for

- Slough will be the premier location in the south east for businesses of all sizes to locate, start, grow, and stay
- The centre of Slough will be vibrant, providing business, living, and cultural opportunities

4. **Other Implications**

(a) Financial There are no financial implications arising from this report. Delivery will be within existing budgets and through partnership collaboration.

(b) Risk Management There are no risk management issues arising from this report

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications There are no human rights or other legal implications arising from this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment Feedback and close monitoring of data would be analysed according to SBC equalities monitoring categories, thereby enabling any differential impact on particular groups to be identified.

5. **Supporting Information**

Background Information

- 5.1 Over the last four years the Police Foundation have worked with the Safer Slough Partnership to establish a more in-depth understanding of the patterns, concentrations, trends, locations, perpetrators, victims and drivers of violence (including domestic violence and abuse).
- 5.2 The work has helped to establish how the police and partners are using available resources and identify any opportunities for, or barriers to, reducing violence (including domestic violence and abuse), and related crime and disorder.
- 5.3 The operational stage of the pilot project commenced on the 7th August 2014 and concluded on the 26th August 2015. The evaluation report (appendix A) included the preliminary findings from the evaluation process and was presented to the Safer Slough Partnership on 8th September 2015.

Preliminary Findings

- 5.4 As part of the evaluation analysis, data on attendance and representation from all 26 fortnightly VMAP meetings in the pilot period were reviewed. VMAP has seen an average of 14 attendees per meeting over this timeframe, a turnout trend which has remained consistent.

- 5.5 In total, there have been 97 different attendees at VMAP. Over half of these have attended only once, an indication of churn and 'self-selection'. However, this turnover has been balanced by a strong core group of attendees, 13 of whom have attended at least half of all meetings.
- 5.6 The VMAP process has proved to be popular with key stakeholders as a way of meeting to discuss complex cases and to share information. The case management process has enabled more collaborative working between agencies with benefits to the agency and the individual being supported. Officers were able to discuss who was best placed to undertake a visit and become a single point of contact, reducing officer time and making it easier for the clients who have chaotic lifestyles to engage with services.
- 5.7 Across the full 12 months of the pilot period, there have been 298 individuals considered by VMAP – two thirds of these originated from Chalvey and Upton wards in the South neighbourhood policing area. The age demographic for VMAP cases shows a strong orientation towards younger age groups, which had been anticipated.
- 5.8 In terms of recurrence statistics, research shows that the VMAP caseload is predominantly comprised of individuals who have come to our notice twice in the last year. Just under a third (approximately 30%) has come to our notice three or more times.
- 5.9 Within the pilot year, 42% of VMAP cases were Domestic Abuse related with the remaining 58% recorded as non-domestic. Within the analysis there was significant overlap between the different roles adopted by VMAP subjects. Of particular interest is the finding that one third of domestic violence victims also presented as domestic violence offenders, blurring any notion of regimented victim / offender typology. The chart below shows the breakdown of domestic and non-domestic offenders who were also a victim of crime.

% of offenders who were also a victim within four years and within ward	DV offenders (106)	Non-DV offenders (95)	Child Abuse offenders (12)	All Offenders (200)
DV victim	12	6	0	10
Non DV victim	11	14	33	12
Child Abuse victim	0	1	0	1
Any victim	23	19	33	21

Pilot evaluation

- 5.10 In evaluating the impact of VMAP, the Police Foundation have used the most robust available measures, given the scale and design of the initiative. Two methods have been employed.
- 5.11 The first measure looked at the rate of subsequent occurrence within the VMAP case load compared to previous years. The second measure takes a 'cohort study' approach, which tracks VMAP subjects over a standardised period (120 days) and compares what happens to them with a similar 'control group' not subject to VMAP.

- 5.12 Both methods of evaluation have generated results that suggest that VMAP has not had a significant positive impact on the rate of recurrent violence. The findings do show that the time period is extended before a recurrence, suggesting that VMAP has started to have a positive impact on the rate of recurrent violence as the length of time between offences is increased.
- 5.13 While the initial findings point to the ineffectiveness of VMAP to reduce violence, participants feel that VMAP is the 'right' thing to do. Others recognise that the impact of VMAP is unlikely to be felt so early on, and that it needs greater longevity to fully realise its crime reduction potential.
- 5.14 As a method of managing complex cases and collaborative working, the VMAP is seen by many practitioners as effective. In the evaluation 90% of respondents agreed that VMAP had a future and that with time it would realise the crime reduction potential.

Next Steps

- 5.15 The preliminary evaluation findings were presented to the project key leads, Ruth Bagley and Simon Bowden, in September 2015 and they were asked to make recommendations regarding the future of VMAP. Based on the evaluation and reports from the chair and co-chair, the key leads made the decision that VMAP should continue as it was too soon to understand the long term benefits of this targeted multi-agency approach.
- 5.16 A Task and Finish group was formed to take the evaluation findings and partners views into account. This group made recommendations as to the frequency of the meetings, focus and the outcomes. VMAP has continued as a process to tackle violence, with the acknowledgement that 42% of cases were associated with Domestic Abuse – therefore Domestic Abuse has a prominent focus.
- 5.17 There are strong links between VMAP and the Domestic Abuse strategy (Appendix B) with VMAP helping to deliver on the three outcomes listed below.
- Children and Young People affected by Domestic Abuse are identified early and protected from further harm
 - Reduce the number of DA victims entering service at higher tiers of need
 - Reduce the number of repeat referrals to MARAC through better coordinated support for victims

6. Comments of Other Committees

There are no comments from other Committees.

7. Conclusion

Although the initial findings of the pilot VMAP evaluation were disappointing it has been agreed that it important that the VMAP approach continues to be delivered on a multi agency basis with close links the recently agreed Slough Domestic Abuse strategy

The approach to managing violence developed by the Police Foundation and the Safer Slough Partnership has enabled a broader understanding of the relationship

between victims and offenders. The methodology and case selection process has focused attention onto those who are at risk of repeating a cycle of chaotic behaviour that has a broader impact on the community. Through the problem solving approach and clear case ownership, VMAP offers a way of coordinating the wide range of agencies and case workers to focus on finding solutions to some of the most challenging individuals and families in Slough.

8. **Appendices Attached**

'A' - The Police Foundation – VMAP evaluation report

'B' - Domestic Abuse Strategy

9. **Background Papers**

None.