



Meeting Report

Meeting: Falkirk Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Forum
Date: 17th September 2009
Venue: Falkirk Council Municipal Buildings (Committee Rooms)

Present Jess Kennedy, Falkirk Council, Corporate & Commercial services (Chair)
Gail Cook, Domestic Abuse Policy Co-ordinator (minutes)
Helen McKean, Central Scotland Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centre
DI Pat Scroggie, Central Scotland Police, Domestic Abuse Unit
Joyce White, Women's Group Coordinator, CEDAR project
Suzie Mosson, Project Worker, Relationships Scotland (CCCS)
Joyce Greenhorn, GIRFEC Pathfinder Coordinator (Central Scotland Police)
Marian Boyle, Education Services, Falkirk Council
Ruth Astbury, Community Development Nurse, NHS Forth Valley
Jan Wallace, Interim Manager, Falkirk & District Women's Aid

Apologies Alastair Robertson, Domestic Abuse Training Coordinator
Catriona Laird, Falkirk Child Protection Committee
Joanna Stewart, Falkirk Council, SDO Homelessness
Wendy Stephen, Victim Support
Sharon McNally, Victim Support Falkirk

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Jess opened the meeting by thanking everyone for coming and noting apologies. Introductions took place around the table. A welcome was extended to Ruth Astbury, Jan Wallace and Joyce Whyte who were attending for the first time.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING – 11th June 2009

The minutes were accepted as an accurate reflection of what was discussed at the last meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Community Safety Strategic Assessment – Jess thanked members for their responses to this and advised that she is attending a meeting on 1st October to discuss this further.

Action Plan 2009/10 – As no amendments were requested this document is now 'active' for the forum.

Training – positive feedback was received from Suzie (Relationships Scotland) and Helen (CSRC&SAC) in relation to Alistair's training.

Jess has still to contact Mr Donnelly (PF for Falkirk) with a view to him coming to a forum

meeting. Pat Scroggie advised that proposals for a domestic abuse court in Falkirk are being looked at. This is because of good feedback from the Glasgow court and will be based on the Scottish Government's toolkit. The Criminal Justice Implementation group has suggested that Falkirk is used as a test area. Mr Donnelly will investigate this as a proposal along with other relevant parties. Timescales are not known yet. It is likely that numbers will not be high enough to run the court on a full time basis.

4. **POLICY / PROCEDURES**

Forth Valley Protocols for Victims of Human Trafficking

Pat advised members about this piece of work. Key individuals are involved in these early initial stages but it is likely that others will be asked to contribute to the development of the document or to provide comments. It was acknowledged that we do not have a clear enough picture about trafficking in the Forth Valley area (or indeed Scotland as a whole) but we do know that it happens and that key services need to be prepared for it. Gail represents AFC on this group.

Pat also advised members that the Scottish Government is reviewing the 1998 Child Protection legislation and part of the guidance covers domestic abuse. Pat, along with other relevant colleagues will be feeding into this. Pat also advised that domestic abuse will be a specific indicator in the Children's Hearing Bill.

5. **AWARENESS RAISING**

16 DAYS OF ACTION 2008

Pat and Gail advised members on activities being planned for this years '16 Days' campaign. If anyone would like to be involved please contact Pat or Gail. Ruth advised that she will keep Health Visitors informed. Gail will let Ruth know when '16 Days' meetings are being held. Discussion took place about the play developed by Graeme's High school last year and it was agreed that it would be good to replicate this type of thing next year. Marian will find out when drama specialists from schools are next due to be meeting and will discuss this idea with them.

Action 1 – Marian to liaise with School drama specialists

Forum Newsletter

Gail advised that this is almost complete and will be forwarded to members in the next couple of weeks.

Web Based Information

On behalf of the forum, Falkirk Council will host information on it's website about violence against women. Gail circulated a template to members in relation to the types of information we might want to consider having available (eg, home page with info about the forum, its members, annual report, minutes, newsletters etc. Definitions and who can help. Training and events. Resources. Contact us) Members are asked to contact Gail if they are prepared to submit statistics or to help write specific areas.

Action 2 – members to consider how they can assist with information for website

Pat spoke about developing a link with 'Young Scot' Falkirk to engage with young people.

6. **FORTH VALLEY WIDE INITIATIVES**

CEDAR PROGRAMME

Joyce advised that the first groups have now come to an end. The programme worked with 13 CYP (ages 5/6, 8/9 and a teenage group) and 4 women. The teenage group in particular were very supportive of each other and formed good friendships. CEDAR workers are considering

how support continues for CYP and mothers once the groups end. Work continues on the CEDAR DVD – Media Co-op has been engaged to make this. New groups will be starting in the next few weeks, with around 13 potential CYP and Mothers. It is expected that there will be x2 CYP groups (ages still to be decided).

A focus for CEDAR workers over the next 3-6 months is to build relationships with referrers and to make sure that all potential referrers are aware of the programme. Gail advised that a CEDAR drop-in will be held in Falkirk during the 16 Days. This is to help raise awareness of the project and let referrers know about the resources being used and how to refer onto the programme. Joyce and Marian offered to assist with the planning of this event. Discussion took place about the possibility of holding a group in the Falkirk area – at the moment all groups are held in Stirling. A suitable venue will need to have easy access and room for 8/9 people to sit in a comfortable environment. A flip chart is required, as is a cupboard to store materials. A big table is also needed for arts/crafts work. Kitchen space would also be good. If anyone knows of a potential venue please contact the Gail or Joyce.

Action 3 – All members consider potential suitable venues in Falkirk for future groups

Non-Court Mandated Perpetrators Programme

Joyce advised that nothing has come back from the Scottish Government yet regarding the funding process. The local FV group is still meeting on a regular basis to plan how such a programme will work and what funding is required. The group has been collating as many local statistics as possible to create a Forth Valley-wide picture of where we are in relation to domestic abuse. A meeting will be held on 29th September to pull together these statistics. Joyce reiterated that there is a lot of enthusiasm to progress this work, even if we are not successful in obtaining funding from the Scottish Government.

7. TRAINING

Alastair Robertson's (FV DA Training Coordinator) update had been previously circulated to forum members.

Marian advised that a Health and Wellbeing group has been set up and that it is looking at all levels of training for staff across the council. Jess confirmed that the domestic abuse training could be included in this process. The training calendar needs to be as cost effective as possible and circulated widely to all relevant personnel. Joyce asked about a diary for training and Pat discussed self nomination for training.

Jess advised that she and Francine Orr (Clackmannanshire Council) will shortly be meeting with Anne Marie Manning from the Scottish Government to look at phase 2 of the National Training Plan and how it affects our local organisations and the impact on local training.

Action 4 – Jess to provide feedback from this meeting to Forum members

8. INDIVIDUAL UPDATES / CURRENT ISSUES

Jan Wallace, Falkirk and District Women's Aid

Jan explained that the Organisation is moving to a management group from a Collective and that the structure change should be in place by the end of the year. They are currently recruiting a new manager and a new Children and Young Persons worker. They are also at the end of a Volunteers recruitment drive. Steps are in place to raise the profile of the service by improving joint working and giving talks to other agencies. They are also developing a DVD.

Helen McKean, CSRC&SAC

The Centre continues to be busy. Helen advised that they are halfway through volunteer training and have been busy doing awareness raising in supermarkets etc. The Service has

recently advertised on Galaxy radio. Rape Crisis Scotland has invited the service to become associate members. The Youth Project is going well and Helen is talking to senior pupils about alcohol abuse and drink spiking. Helen advised members about the treasure hunt that is being held in Callendar park on 15th November to mark the World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse.

Marian Boyle, Education Services, Falkirk Council

Marian advised that the 'Safe as Houses' materials will be reviewed / evaluated with a view to them potentially being rolled out across the Council area. It is anticipated that the materials will be put on the Council's website.

Ruth Astbury, NHS Forth Valley

Ruth explained that she has responsibility for Health Visitors across Falkirk and she is keen to ensure that they know about other local support services. She has been circulating leaflets and information to them and wonders if agencies would be keen to meet Health Visitors as it is important to put names to faces and develop working relationships. This was met with a positive response. Please contact Ruth directly if anyone is keen to pursue this option (ruthastbury@nhs.net)

Suzie Mosson, Relationships Scotland (Couple Counselling Central Scotland)

Suzie advised that whilst this has been a fairly quiet time in terms of referrals, she has recently had a meeting with the Samaritans, attended the Freshers Fayre in Falkirk, had a stall in Falkirk High Street, attended the domestic abuse court in Glasgow and has had several meetings re joint working across Forth Valley (eg Caledonian Youth, Aberlour, Cornton Vale, Couple Counselling).

DI Pat Scroggie, Central Scotland Police

Pat distributed statistics to members, comparing figures from July/August 2008 with July/August 2009.

Domestic Abuse VPRs with children were down 29% from 406 to 315.

Domestic Abuse VPRs with no children involved were down 15% from 252 to 219.

Pat advised that the Service was looking to improve its services to domestic abuse victims about the time of the next old firm match. Domestic Abuse staff will be available on the day of the match (Sunday) from 1pm-9pm. Where incidents of domestic abuse are investigated, domestic abuse staff will be informed and will make contact with the victim.

Sergeant Joyce Greenhorn, GIRFEC Pathfinder Coordinator

Joyce advised that the project has supported 249 families and 376 children (49% were pre-school, 39% primary and 12% secondary age). This has highlighted that there is a gap in support for pre-school children. At the moment the only services for pre-school age are Aberlour and the CEDAR project. Joyce is currently looking for additional services where this group can be referred to. She is looking at additional funding streams for Aberlour/CLASP. On average x15 families per month come through the Pathfinder project. Family cases are constantly reviewed and any necessary changes can be made.

The national average figure for repeat victims of domestic abuse (2007-08) is 54%. In our area this is 22% (16% repeated once, 4% repeated x2, 2% repeated more than 3 times).

Evaluation of the project is still ongoing and Joyce is trying to get some feedback at a local level. Joyce reported that 284 staff have attended GIRFEC/domestic abuse training and that feedback has been positive. Specific training is being developed for health professionals and Joyce is in regular contact with them about this.

Jess Kennedy, Forth Valley Domestic Abuse Strategy Group

Jess thanked everyone for the work they do for their individual services and for their contribution to the forum.

Domestic Abuse Policy Coordinator

Gail had previously circulated her update to members by email.

9. AOCB

MAP Survey - Jess advised that the FV Domestic Abuse Strategy Group was keen to get members thoughts on MAP meetings, partnership working, training etc and, as such, was in the process of developing a survey. This will be circulated to members before the end of the year. Jess encouraged everyone to complete it and share their opinions.

Falkirk Community Safety Partnership - Pat Scroggie advised that he is working with Jim Devoy from the Falkirk CSP to decide strategic priorities for the future.

10. Final Meeting of 2009

Thursday 17th December - 9.30am in Municipal Buildings, Falkirk