

SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 24 NOVEMBER 2021**PROCEDURAL MATTERS – PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES****1. Question submitted by Zöe Franklin**

Violence against women and girls is a deeply serious and pressing issue that has no place in our society. Sadly we have seen a significant increase in incidents of domestic violence during the Covid lockdowns and it is also a reality that violence against women in general increases during the Christmas period.

Can the Police and Crime Commissioner advise whether she has contacted the Government, and in particular the Home Secretary, in relation to their proposed information campaign targeting the perpetrators of violence against women which has now been delayed to press them to act more swiftly as per my letter of 9th November? Furthermore, can she also advise what plans she has alongside Surrey Police to ensure that police staff receive training in understanding the impact of trauma on victims, including members of the trans community so that outcomes for victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse across Surrey are improved?

Response:

With regards to the delay in the Government's proposed information campaign, I recognise the concern but would highlight that there has been significant investment in domestic abuse and sexual assault related services in recent years, both nationally and locally.

The Ministry of Justice has provided Police and Crime Commissioners with significant uplifts in funding to support delivery of such services during 2021/22, and were proactive in making money available during 2020/21 to support COVID-19 mitigation.

In Surrey this additional funding has allowed us to significantly increase our IDVA and ISVA capacity, counselling provision and general support to victims of domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault.

A summary of local services funded with the Ministry of Justice Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Uplift during 2021/22:

<https://sums.org/app/shared.php?function=contracts&expset=365&budget=99&approved=yes&account=1&key=2453a247b8970b32d16005cc08662f922356ef72&expire=1668772407>

QR Link:



A summary of additional IDVA and ISVA posts funded with the Ministry of Justice dedicated IDVA/ISVA Fund during 2021/22:



<https://sums.org/app/shared.php?function=contracts&expset=365&budget=103&approved=yes&account=1&key=56f1231d1fe5e060dff8bbb2da2c5a7a9d53fd4d&expire=1668775643>

My office has also successfully bid for Home Office funding to support the rollout of a new Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator programme – directly targeting perpetrators and placing responsibility firmly at their feet. We have also been proactive in using locally derived funding to increase our support for Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) related services, including the rollout of embedded stalking and domestic abuse advocates within police teams, helping to better meet the needs of victims whilst also supporting the development of understanding amongst officers and staff.

Importantly, our key services (whilst cognisant of the gendered nature of rape and sexual assault) are open to all individuals, regardless of sex or whether the crime has been reported to the police.

As Surrey's Police and Crime Commissioner, I am in regular contact with the Home Secretary and she is aware of my firm commitment to urgently tackle violence against women and improve protection for children. However, I also believe that any government information campaign requires careful planning to ensure it has a meaningful and long-lasting impact, and I wouldn't want to see a rushed product that might ultimately hit a deadline but miss the point.

In relation to training, Surrey Police has already commenced the rollout of trauma informed training, using external experts. Furthermore, in April 2021 Surrey Police launched their VAWG strategy, which places prevention and support at the centre of policing in Surrey. In line with the strategy, Surrey Police are engaging directly with survivors and women with lived experience of VAWG, to deliver a modern, trauma-informed service in line with the National Vulnerability Action Plan. This includes a significant focus on redesigning training and improving the understanding of officers and staff.

As Police and Crime Commissioner I will continue to oversee progress against the plan through my annual scrutiny programme.

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey (PCC)