

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To set out potential further actions that the Council could take in support of the White Ribbon Campaign that aims to rid society of all forms of violence and abuse against women and our application for Town Award status for North Lincolnshire.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The White Ribbon Campaign aims to end all forms of violence and abuse against women and promote respectful relationships. It is led by men who are willing to take a stand against violence towards women and girls and act as positive role models to other men in the community. They encourage men to pledge never to commit violence against women, never to excuse violence against women, and never to remain silent about violence against women.
- 2.2 Domestic abuse is not confined to violence by men towards women. Men are also victims of domestic abuse. As such, local domestic abuse services support both male and female victims.
- 2.3 Supporting the White Ribbon campaign is consistent with our aim of making our communities safer and stronger, by ensuring that men are not remaining silent about violence against women. It provides an opportunity to focus on preventative measures towards reducing the incidence of domestic abuse. The recently procured Integrated Domestic Abuse Support Service includes a specified requirement for the appointed service provider to work with those who harm, thereby allowing perpetrators access to preventative programmes.
- 2.4 Supporting the White Ribbon Campaign will assist the work of the Council in relation to reducing domestic abuse, but in isolation will not eradicate it. There are various work streams that the Council is progressing that all work together to deal with domestic abuse.
- 2.5 The White Ribbon Town Award is for local authorities wishing to demonstrate their commitment to the aims of the White Ribbon Campaign (WRC), addressing and altering social norms that lead to violent behaviour against women, involving men in prevention activities, increasing awareness on the

issue and providing services aimed at reducing the incidence of domestic abuse.

- 2.6 Most importantly, a White Ribbon Council should strive to mobilise the entire local community under the goal of ending violence against women. They are required to meet specific criteria in order to hold the nationally recognised title of a “White Ribbon Town”.
- 2.7 A White Ribbon Campaign group has been established to oversee local work towards obtaining the Town Award for North Lincolnshire. The group includes representation from the local authority but also partner agencies (including; Ongo, professional companies, Humberside Police etc) who act as White Ribbon ambassadors providing invaluable input into our application. An Action Plan has been submitted for approval by the White Ribbon Campaign and to secure their support to achieve all aspects of that plan.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 There are a number of ways in which the Council might directly contribute further towards achieving our priorities and securing the White Ribbon Town award, as follows:
 - 3.1.1 Update the Domestic Violence Policy within the Human Resource manual. This currently contains the old definition of domestic abuse and was last amended in February 2013.
 - 3.1.2 Consider the Code of Conduct for employees and specify that domestic abuse is a behaviour that is never acceptable – at this time it only says *‘Not behave in a way, in work or outside work, which would call into question their suitability to work for the council;’*
 - 3.1.3 When commissioning and procuring services ensure that within contracts and service specifications, there is reference to domestic abuse and ensuring that new service providers operate a domestic abuse workplace policy where this is relevant to the subject matter of the contract. The council policy could be used as a model policy for potential service providers to adopt to meet these requirements.
 - 3.1.4 Consider linkages and associated inclusion opportunities with the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process.
 - 3.1.5 Consider youth engagement as part of the White Ribbon Campaign. The Campaign Group includes a School Improvement Officer so we can ensure the expansion to boys and young men the ethos of White Ribbon. Study United are also working with schools to produce a YouTube interview with Scunthorpe United. Work is ongoing within schools with Peer Mentors and we could utilise this forum to take the word further into schools about healthy relationships which in turn will be inclusive to include broader issues also relating to violence by females against males. A link into the local colleges might also help in promoting the White Ribbon Campaign and the wider issues connected with healthy relationships. Positive discussions with the Youth Council have already taken place on these issues.

- 3.1.6 Encourage Cabinet and all other elected members to act as community role models in promoting and encouraging action against domestic violence, including via their wider involvement in local community bodies etc.
- 3.1.7 Making effective use of public facing service facilities, for example within public library services, leisure services, local link etc. to have a good front facing customer service with knowledge about the White Ribbon Campaign and domestic abuse.
- 3.1.8 Providing training for all relevant Council staff on domestic abuse and where to signpost. A 'Basic Awareness' e-learning course is already available on the Learning Lincs site. This could become part of the compulsory induction programme for new employees. The Assistant Director Customer Services has agreed to assist in making sure that all front line public facing staff undertake the e-learning package if they have not already done so. We will also explore opportunities to make this training package available for use by local residents, communities and businesses using internet channels.
- 3.1.9 Provide a presentation to the Health and Wellbeing Board to raise the profile of domestic abuse and the linkages with the health and wellbeing agenda.
- 3.1.10 Work with local community and business organisations to raise the profile of the White Ribbon Campaign and domestic abuse across different communities and cultures. There is changing demographics within the area that bring different demands on services, thereby requiring new approaches to how we respond. The health and wellbeing agenda is aimed at reducing inequalities.
- 3.1.11 Link with the People directorate in supporting their service aims of ensuring that Families are Safe, Supported and Transformed. With the prospect of young men and boys taking part in the White Ribbon Campaign then they will be able to have their voice heard and be part of their local community. It will also promote prevention and early intervention.
- 3.1.12 Provide information to anyone disclosing domestic abuse of where to gain assistance when they self refer for help or disclose difficulties to any Council staff and to consider a referral for anonymous support within the Councils Welfare Services.
- 3.1.13 Consider a graduate placement or apprenticeship opportunity to help in delivering these initiatives and support our work to secure the White Ribbon Town Award standard.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 The initiatives proposed above seek to better embed the White Ribbon campaign within council policy and ensure that our resources are utilised fully in support of the campaign towards achieving the White Ribbon Town Award standard.
- 4.2 The principles of the White Ribbon Campaign focus on the prevention of domestic abuse that could potentially contribute in a transformational way towards reducing demands for victim support interventions.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 5.1 Finance – support for events and promotional material throughout the year.
- 5.2 Staffing – provision of a Council graduate/apprenticeship to assist in the application to the White Ribbon Campaign to gain Town Award status.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

- 6.1 N/A

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

- 7.1 The White Ribbon Campaign has the support of local elected representatives and providers of domestic abuse support services.
- 7.2 Colleagues in relevant services across the Council were consulted on the suitability of the various initiatives contained in this paper and have offered support in moving these forward if approved.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Council demonstrates its ongoing commitment to the White Ribbon Campaign and in this context supports the various initiatives set out in this paper to take this matter forward.

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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Background papers used in the preparation of this report - Nil