



**ARTICLE NO:**

**CORPORATE & ENVIRONMENTAL  
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

**MEMBERS UPDATE 2016/17  
ISSUE: 1**

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**Article of: Director of Leisure and Wellbeing**

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**SUBJECT: LISTING OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASES – CONSULTATION  
RESPONSE**

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Wards affected: Borough wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF ARTICLE**

1.1 To advise Members of a recent response made to a consultation.

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**2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Council has in place a procedure in relation to responses to consultations. In cases where there is insufficient time to take an issue to Committee, responses can be agreed with the relevant Portfolio Holder and sent to meet a specific deadline.

2.2 The Cumbria and Lancashire Judicial Business Group recently ran a consultation on the listing of Domestic Violence cases between 28<sup>th</sup> April and 10<sup>th</sup> June. Members were notified of this consultation by email on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

2.3 The consultation concerned moving any Lancashire Domestic Violence cases to either a centrally located court or just a few courts, in Lancashire.

**3.0 ISSUES**

3.1 As Ormskirk Magistrates Court is due to close at the end of June, legal cases, including domestic violence cases, for West Lancashire are due to be heard in another court anyway. However, other cases are being split between Wigan (Skelmersdale cases) and Preston (other West Lancashire cases) to reflect the good communication links between Skelmersdale and Wigan.

3.2 Whilst not all victims of domestic violence attend court to give evidence, their experience(s) do help the Magistrates gain a good idea of the situation and the impact of the abuse and as such their attendance is welcomed. Obviously they are likely to be vulnerable and may not have access to a vehicle, so to make it

difficult for them to attend via public transport may just be too much of a barrier to their attendance.

3.3 The consultation was discussed at the West Lancashire Community Safety Partnership (WLCSP) and the comments that were received related to encouraging attendance at court and making it as easy to attend as possible.

3.4 These comments were supported by the Leader and the Portfolio Holder.

#### **4.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

4.1 On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June the comments attached at Appendix 1 were sent to the HM Courts and Tribunal Service on behalf of both the Council and the WLCSP.

#### **5.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

5.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report/update and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder.

#### **6.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no additional financial implications for the Council in relation to this consultation.

#### **7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

7.1 This item is for information only and makes no recommendations. It therefore does not require a formal risk assessment and no changes have been made to risk registers as a result of this report.

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### **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

The decision to reply to the consultation does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

### **Appendices.**

Appendix 1 – Consultation questions and responses.