

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Cabinet 10 April 2019
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Report title	Tackling Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Including Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2019-2022	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Hazel Malcolm Public Health and Wellbeing	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Accountable Director	John Denley, Director of Public Health	
Originating service	Community Safety	
Accountable employee	Lynsey Kelly	Head of Community Safety
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Report to be/has been considered by	Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel	5 February 2019
	Public Health Leadership Team	12 March 2019
	Strategic Executive Board	26 March 2019
	Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Board	1 April 2019

Recommendation for decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

Endorse the Tackling Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Including Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2019-2022.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The Tackling Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Including Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2019-2022 (IPV) has been approved by the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Board. Cabinet are asked to endorse the Strategy and support its implementation.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The current Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy will end in March 2019; as such the strategy has been refreshed and updated.
- 2.2 In line with the national Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, IPV Strategy (Appendix 1) encompasses domestic violence, honour-based violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, sexual violence, however, includes the recently added issue of stalking and harassment.
- 2.3 The strategy acknowledges that the majority of victims are female but recognises that there are both male and female victims and perpetrators in heterosexual and same sex relationships. It also aims to address additional barriers which deter particular groups and communities from seeking help and support.
- 2.4 Significant progress has been made during the period of the previous strategy (2016-2019) across the strands of prevention, service provision, protection and justice, and performance and governance. These strands remain the cornerstones of the new strategy, as does the importance of effective partnership working and engagement with our communities.
- 2.5 Successes include:
 - A consistent increase in reports of domestic abuse to Police, suggesting an increased confidence in reporting
 - Year on year increases in successful outcomes for VAWG offences at court
 - Increases in non-Police referrals of high-risk cases to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC); increase to 37% (from 25% in 2015-2016)
 - The work of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors has seen a reduction in repeat cases at MARAC.
- 2.6 Delivery against the VAWG strategy is directly aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan, where it contributes to both the Keeping the City Safe and the Safeguarding People in Vulnerable Situations priorities. In addition to the corporate commitment, delivery will be partnership based, and has the full support of both adults and children's safeguarding boards.
- 2.7 Since April 2011, SWP has been required to undertake Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) for every domestic violence related death occurring in the city, a number of which have attracted media interest. The strategy directly supports implementation of recommendations from the city's DHRs, serious case reviews (SCRs) and safeguarding adult reviews, enabling partners to evidence the proactive approach taken in response to review findings. SWP remains committed to ensuring that any learning from DHRs and

SCRs is effectively disseminated across the partnership and works collaboratively with the Safeguarding Boards in doing this.

3.0 Tackling Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Including Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2019-2022 - Overview

3.1 The Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (SWP) is the strategic lead for addressing VAWG in Wolverhampton. The Partnership is committed to:

- Addressing the root cause of VAWG
- Challenging perpetrators and holding them to account
- Alleviating the wide-ranging effects of all forms of VAWG on victims, survivors, their children and our communities.

3.2 The VAWG strategy name acknowledges the gendered nature of interpersonal violence; in that the majority of victims are female. However, it cannot be over-emphasised that the national and local strategies recognise that there are both female and male victims and perpetrators and therefore encompass work around women and girls, and also men and boys; this is reflected in the title of the refreshed strategy.

3.3 The VAWG strategy covers six key themes: Domestic Abuse (DA), Sexual Violence (SV), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Honour Based Violence (HBV), Forced Marriage (FM) and Stalking and Harassment.

3.4 These crimes are cross-cutting issues and there is a requirement to tackle them in partnership. Building on the significant progress made against previous strategies, partners continue to review their core operations, managing budgetary constraints against a backdrop of increasing demand. A greater collaborative effort is therefore needed in the commissioning and delivery of services to realise efficiencies, mitigate risk, address potential gaps in service, and shape new approaches. Data will also be reviewed regularly to identify any new forms of VAWG which require focus.

3.5 The analysis of current data has allowed the strategy document to outline each area of VAWG, provide data about the prevalence of reporting of the crime and summarise areas of early focus.

3.6 The strategy outlines the following key outcomes, and shorter-term objectives to deliver against these.

IPV Strategy Objectives	IPV Strategy Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the early identification of and intervention with victims of VAWG• Build cross-agency skills and capability to provide effective VAWG advice and support services• Improve the criminal justice response to supporting victims of VAWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce serious harm resulting from VAWG including homicide prevention• Reduce the prevalence of VAWG• Reduce the rate of repeat incidents for domestic violence• Increase the rate of reported VAWG offences brought to justice

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the number of perpetrators and offenders managed to reduce risk	
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4.0 Model of Delivery

4.1 A multi-agency action plan will be developed to underpin the strategy and drive delivery. The accompanying model of delivery will be centred on:

Prevention: Raising awareness amongst practitioners, communities and other stakeholders, delivery of training, education and embedding improved practice as part of existing safeguarding responsibilities.

Provision, Protection & Justice: Focusing on victim safety, effective management of offenders, increasing the accountability of perpetrators and use of the full range of criminal and civil justice remedies.

Performance: Capturing performance data systematically, reviewing progress, disseminating learning and identifying best practice.

5.0 Summary of Consultation Responses and Strategy Revisions

5.1 A 12-week consultation on the strategy was launched on 17 Dec 2018 and ended on 12 March 2019 which sought input from stakeholders. As part of that consultation process, a presentation was delivered to Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel on 5 February 2019, outlining areas of focus for the VAWG strategy and prompting discussion; comments from Scrutiny Panel were noted and have been fed into the revised strategy. Comments were centred largely on aspects of delivery, and the overwhelming endorsement of Scrutiny Panel was secured.

5.2 The consultation was widely promoted with input actively sought from communities of interest, Councillors, communities and the faith sector. There is a significant level of support for the strategy from elected members, public sector partners, schools, voluntary and community sector organisations and residents. Group responses have included feedback from; Refugee Migrant Centre, St Georges Hub (male victims), The Fowler Centre, Resilience Group, CCG, Community Cohesion Forum a total of 144 responses have been received.

5.3 Comments have included:

- Aims and objectives easy to understand
- Welcomed the addition of stalking and harassment
- Focus on involving communities and religious settings in raising awareness and delivery of key messages was positive
- Change of title to be more inclusive (reflected in final version)
- Focus on delivery in education settings (reflected in final version)

6.0 Evaluation of alternative options

- 6.1 The VAWG Strategy 2016-2019 will expire on 31 March 2019. Alternative options included not refreshing the strategy or incorporating VAWG into the Violence and Exploitation Strategy.

7.0 Reasons for decision

- 7.1 Given the significant difference between VAWG and other violent crimes the decision was taken to refresh the VAWG strategy and keep it as a standalone strategy. The drivers behind the interpersonal violence associated with all crimes within the strategy have no relevance to the public place violence seen with youth, weapon-related crimes.
- 7.2 Not refreshing the strategy may have prevented the Council from fulfilling its legal requirements detailed in section 9.0 and cause reputational damage for the Authority.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 Any costs arising from this report will be funded from the 2019-2020 grant allocation from the Police and Crime Commissioner.

[MI/19032019/D]

9.0 Legal implications

- 9.1 Sections 5 and 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 require the Council and other responsible authorities to formulate and implement strategies to reduce crime and disorder in the area; Section 17 places a duty on the Council to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in the area. Implementation of the strategy contributes towards the Council's duties in this regard.
- 9.2 A new mandatory reporting duty for FGM came into force on 31 October 2015 under Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (amended under Section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015). The duty requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report known and apparent cases of FGM in under 18-year-olds to the police and to comply with statutory reporting guidance.
- 9.3 There is a statutory requirement for SWP to undertake Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) for every domestic violence-related death occurring within its locality, under section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victim Act (2004). This provision came into force on 13th April 2011.

[TS/21032019/Q]

10.0 Equalities implications

- 10.1 A full equality analysis has been completed which highlights the positive contribution the strategy will make to addressing the gendered nature of these crimes, where victims are predominantly women; however, the strategy acknowledges that there are both male and female victims and perpetrators in heterosexual and same sex relationships. It also positively recognises the targeted work to remove barriers to victims with protected characteristics who are seeking help.

11.0 Health and wellbeing implications

11.1 Domestic Abuse is a significant Public Health Issue. Providing a robust approach to tackling VAWG will reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse and will in turn improve physical and mental health of those who are affected.

12.0 Environmental implications

12.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

13.0 Human resources implications

13.1 There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

14.0 Corporate landlord implications

14.1 There are no Corporate Landlord implications arising from this report.

15.0 Schedule of background papers

15.1 Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel, 5 February 2019 – [Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2019-2022 \(presentation\)](#)

16.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Tackling Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Including Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2019-2022