

Adult and Safer City Scrutiny Panel

29 January 2019

Report title Violence Against Women and Girls
Strategy 2019-2022 - Consultation

Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Hazel Malcolm Public Health and Wellbeing
Wards affected	All
Accountable director	John Denley, Director of Public Health
Originating service	Community Safety
Accountable employee(s)	Karen Samuels Head of Community Safety Tel 01902 551341 Email Karen.samuels@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Public Health Leadership Team 12 March 2019 Strategic Executive Board 26 March 2019 Cabinet 10 April 2019

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Scrutiny Panel is recommended to:

1. Comment on the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership draft Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2019-2022 as part of the consultation process.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide a summary of the draft Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2019-2022.
- 1.2 To outline the development process for the strategy, including consultation timescales.
- 1.3 To request input from Scrutiny on the draft document as part of the twelve-week consultation process.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The current VAWG strategy will end in March 2019; as such the strategy has been refreshed and updated.
- 2.2 In line with the national strategy of the same name, Wolverhampton's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2019-2022 (Appendix A) 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 The draft 2019-2022 VAWG Strategy outlines significant progress made during the period of the last strategy 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.

3.0 Overview of Draft Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2019-2022

- 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 Violence (DV), 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 draft strategy document to outline each area of VAWG, provide data about the prevalence of reporting of the crime and summarise areas of early focus.

4.0 Early Areas of Focus

Domestic Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More effective management of low-medium risk cases through safety planning to avoid escalation of risk. • Greater emphasis needed on reducing repeat victimisation. • Improved provision for the management of complex cases. • Embedding the stepped risk-model for managing offenders and perpetrators to shift the focus of responsibility and accountability from the victim to the offender. • Direct preventative work in schools and other settings around positive relationships and protective behaviours • Embedding learning from DHRs • Joined up criminal and civil justice protection processes
FGM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to raise awareness within targeted communities to emphasise the full legal, health and safeguarding implications of FGM. • Seek feedback from survivors to shape future services to meet the needs of our diverse communities. • Continue to raise awareness of FGM amongst frontline practitioners and increase understanding of mandatory reporting requirements. • Strengthen engagement with schools, especially leading up to the summer holiday ‘cutting season’ • Work with community and faith organisations to raise awareness and challenge acceptance • Improve systematic recording of FGM across partners • Update the profile of communities where FGM is prevalent within their countries of origin
Forced Marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop profile to better identify prevalence • Raise awareness of FM amongst frontline practitioners. • Raise awareness across communities of the illegality of FM.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support schools to deliver key messages regards FM within the curriculum.
HBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh of the Wolverhampton FM and HBV protocol for frontline practitioners Raise awareness of HBV amongst frontline practitioners Raise awareness across communities of the illegality of HBV-related crimes and engage communities to challenge cultural norms Support schools to deliver key messages regards HBV within the curriculum.
Sexual Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of reporting and care pathways including to/from the SARC. Promoting with frontline staff, the links to CSE. Strengthen care pathways for specialist adult and child provision
Stalking and Harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of the law and legal implications relating to stalking and harassment. Raise awareness of stalking and harassment amongst frontline practitioners. Promotion of reporting and available care pathways.

5.0 Strategy Outcomes

5.1 The strategy outlines the following key outcomes:

- Build cross-agency skills and capability to provide effective VAWG advice and support services
- Reduce serious harm resulting from VAWG, including homicide prevention
- Increase the number and rate of reported offences brought to justice
- Reduce the prevalence of VAWG
- Improve the criminal justice response to supporting victims of VAWG
- Increase early identification and intervention with victims of VAWG
- Increase the number of perpetrators and offenders managed to reduce risk
- Reduce the rate of repeat incidents for domestic violence.

6.0 Consultation and Timescales

6.1 SWP holds the governance arrangements for the VAWG Strategy in Wolverhampton. The partnership has tasked Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum and its multi-agency Executive Board to coordinate a refresh of the current VAWG strategy and action plan, which ends March 2019, in conjunction with wider partnerships.

6.2 The strategy has been drafted following analysis of current data trends, intelligence, and gathering views from organisations and sectors through ongoing consultation. SWP is now seeking the wider views of stakeholders and residents.

- 6.3 Consultation for the draft strategy will run for a 12-week period to comply with Wolverhampton's Compact agreement. You can see the full draft strategy in Appendix A. The full consultation can be found on Survey Monkey using this link:
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/TWMBM5Q>

The consultation period is 17 December 2018 – 12 March 2019.

7.0 Questions for Scrutiny to consider

- 7.1 Scrutiny members are asked to consider the following questions:

- a. Do you feel that the draft strategy is easy to understand and provides clear aims and objectives?
- b. Do you think that the areas of focus will address the priorities? Is there anything else you feel that the partnership should incorporate?
- c. To ensure services are as accessible as possible, we will engage with and seek feedback from a range of communities; undertake research and surveys with existing and previous service users; provide help seeking information in a range of languages, formats, and media. Is there anything else you feel the partnership should incorporate to ensure universal access to services?
- d. Are there any other comments that you would like to include in the consultation?

8.0 Next Steps

- 8.1 Following this consultation period all feedback will be reviewed and necessary revisions will be made to the draft strategy prior to seeking its endorsement at Cabinet on 10 April 2019. A timeline outlining the approval process is detailed in section 5.

- 8.2 The following engagement around the strategy has already taken place:

- Circulated amongst voluntary sector via Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council
- Safer Wolverhampton Partnership partners
- Emailed directly to interested parties
- CWC intranet articles encouraging colleagues to have their say
- Press release
- SWP & CWC Social Media
- VAWG Communications group
- Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum Executive Board
- Circulated to key partners including Wolverhampton CCG, The Haven Wolverhampton, Women of Wolverhampton, X2Y, Black Country Partnership Foundation Trust, Wolverhampton Homes, Strategic Housing, Adult Social Care (CWC), Safeguarding (CWC), Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum, Refugee and Migrant Centre and West Midlands Police
- Schools, through the Headteachers bulletin

- Voluntary Sector Council including communities of interest and Faith Sector
- Safeguarding, CWC and SWP Websites

8.3 We are committed to engage as many people as possible during the development of the strategy and continue to seek the suggestions of partners for further engagement methods.

9.0 Timeline

Consultation Begins (12 Weeks)	17 December 2018
Public Health Leadership Team	8 January 2019
Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Board	18 January 2019
Adult and Safer City Scrutiny Panel	29 January 2019
Children and Young People Leadership Team	22 February 2019
Consultation Ends	12 March 2019
Design Team	4 – 8 March
Public Health Leadership Team	12 March 2019
Joint Safeguarding Board	13 March 2019
WDVF Executive Board (virtually)	Mid-March 2019
Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (virtually)	Mid-March 2019
SEB	26 March 2019
Cabinet	10 April 2019

10.0 Financial implications

10.1 Implementing the VAWG Strategy will require a multi-agency approach with a required change in mainstream practice across the contributing partners. Where specialist commissioned services are needed, these will be delivered through a variety of funding streams including the annual allocation of grants, issued to SWP and its partners by the Police & Crime Commissioner. [MI/17012018/Q]

11.0 Legal implications

11.1 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.

11.2 A 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.

11.3 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/15012019/G]

12.0 Equalities implications

12.1 The strategy acknowledges that whilst the majority of victims are female, there are both male and female victims and perpetrators, in heterosexual and same sex relationships. It also aims to address additional barriers to seeking help for particular groups and communities which may be disproportionately impacted by VAWG. A full equality analysis is being completed as part of the strategy development.

13.0 Environmental implications

13.1 There are no environmental implications within this report.

14.0 Human resources implications

14.1 There are no human resource implications within this report.

15.0 Corporate landlord implications

15.1 There are no Corporate Landlord implications for the Council's property portfolio.

16.0 Schedule of background papers

16.1 There are no background papers.