

Classification: Public

Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Community & Leisure Cabinet Committee

Date: 10 November 2022

Reporting officer: Domestic Abuse Coordinator/Community Safety Operations Manager

Subject: Tackling Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls

Purpose and summary of report:

To report the council's priorities for discussion.

Recommendations:

- (i) That the Committee comments on the draft priorities.

Key Implications:	
Item	Implications
Legal	The Council has a statutory obligation to work with partner agencies to address domestic abuse (Domestic Abuse Act 2021).
Finance and Value for Money	The council has received £33,090 per annum from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to support the Domestic Abuse Coordinator post for a two-year period. The council helps fund Kent & Medway's domestic abuse commissioned services and has received funding from the Government's Safer Streets Fund to help create safer public spaces. The need for further funding will be reviewed as and when additional actions are identified in support of these priorities.
Corporate Plan	The Strategy contributes to the achievement of community safety objectives of the Corporate Plan 2019-23 under #1 People: <i>a proud community; where residents can call a safe, clean and attractive borough their home.</i>
Climate Change	The council is committed to the use of its resources to achieve net zero by 2030. This includes works to improve housing stock that may be used to support victims of domestic abuse.

1. Tackling Domestic Abuse

- 1.1 The Domestic Abuse Act was enacted in 2021 and in 2022 the Government launched its strategy to tackle domestic violence. The *Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan* sets out the Government's approach "to drive down the prevalence of

domestic abuse and domestic homicide and provide victims and survivors with the support they need”.

- 1.2 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places additional responsibilities on all Local Authorities to tackle domestic abuse. In Kent, Kent County Council (as the Tier 1 Authority) has a primary duty to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and in other safe accommodation. It is also required to establish a Domestic Abuse Partnership Board to coordinate domestic abuse activities across the county.
- 1.3 As a Tier 2 Authority under the Act, Gravesham Borough Council is required to work in collaboration with Kent County Council and other partners and is represented and an active member of the Local Partnership Board. such has responsibilities to support victims of domestic abuse. This is line with national policy to prevent people becoming perpetrators and victims.
- 1.4 The council’s priorities in tackling Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls are appended to this report. They are draft and the committee is invited to comment on these priorities in advance of the development of the council’s strategy.

2. Appendices

- 2.1 Tackling Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls – Priorities for Discussion.

3. Background Documents

- 3.1 There are no background documents.

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Secondary Implications	
Risk Assessment	Failure to effectively support victims of domestic abuse will reduce public confidence in the Local Authority's ability to support individuals. Responding to domestic abuse in an unstructured and disjointed way will serve to keep any positive impact at a minimum and makes improvements less sustainable long-term.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	<p><i>A data protection impact assessment (DPIA) should be carried out at the start of any major project involving the use of personal data or if you are making a significant change to an existing process.</i></p> <p>a. Does the project/change being recommended through this paper involve the processing of personal data or special category data or criminal offence data? A definition of each type of data can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website via the above links. No</p> <p>b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice? NA</p> <p>c. If no to question b, please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at gdpr@medway.gov.uk. Click here to start typing</p>
Equality Impact Assessment	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer. No</p> <p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer. Yes – victims frequently turn to the local authority for support and advice. Improving services to respond to domestic abuse will make a positive contribution to quality of life.</p> <p><i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i></p>
Crime and Disorder	Domestic abuse has a direct influence on Gravesham's Crime figures and tackling domestic abuse and violence against women and girls is reflected as a priority in the Community Safety Partnership's Strategy. Support for victims of domestic abuse is reflected in the council's Safeguarding Policy and responsibilities.
Digital and website implications	Communication and reassurance activity is fundamental to delivery of the council's priorities in respect of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults	The safeguarding of vulnerable young people and adults is a high priority for the Council and partner agencies. Victims of domestic abuse vulnerable to victimisation will receive more tailored support and assistance to protect them from future harm.