

	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Community Leadership Committee</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">23 November 2016</h3>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Title</b></p>	<p><b>Preventing and Responding to Violence against Women and Girls &amp; Domestic Violence and Abuse (VAWG &amp; DVA) in Barnet 2017-2020</b></p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Report of</b></p>	<p>Jamie Blake, Commissioning Director, Environment</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Wards</b></p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Status</b></p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Urgent</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Key</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Enclosures</b></p>	<p>None</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Officer Contact Details</b></p>	<p>Kiran Vagarwal,  <i>Strategic Lead - Safer Communities Environment Commissioning Group</i>  <a href="mailto:Kiran.vagarwal@barnet.gov.uk">Kiran.vagarwal@barnet.gov.uk</a>            Tel 0208 359 2953</p>

## Summary

Preventing and responding to Violence against Women and Girls and Domestic Violence and Abuse (referred to as VAWG from hereon) remains one of the key priorities for Barnet Safer Communities Partnership and its current strategy ending in 2020.

The strategic approach proposed for Barnet, takes into account recent local, regional and the national strategy frameworks for VAWG and new legislation. There will also be changes in the government's future funding and commissioning arrangements for VAWG services and programmes delivered at regional and local borough level. Developing a local strategy that takes these changes into account will ensure Barnet Council and its partners are prepared for the new approach, and are in line with the developing strategic and legal framework responding to VAWG.

The current DVA and VAWG Strategy will continue to be in place until March 2017 with the new strategy going live in April 2017. This is to enable Barnet to take into consideration the various strategies, policies and future funding regimes that have been and are being introduced post March 2016, for example the new Home Office Strategy was not released until March 2016 and we are awaiting the new Crime and Policing Plan which will set out a new priority in the Police and Crime Plan focussing on VAWG. It will also enable us to fully consult with our statutory and voluntary partners, the public, victims, survivors, families and perpetrators.

The agreement process for this strategy is as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Who/Meeting</b>	<b>Comments</b>
22 March 2017  Sign off of the <u>final draft</u> VAWG and DVA Strategy	DVA and VAWG Delivery Board	Partnership Sub group of the Safer Communities Partnership Board leading on the delivery and monitoring of the Boroughs Partnership Strategy
28 April 2017  Sign off of the final Barnet partnership VAWG & DVA Strategy 2017-2020	Safer Communities Partnership Board	Statutory Partnership Board leading in the delivery of Barnet's Community Safety Plan and linked Strategies.

The following options can be considered in terms of further consultation with members of the Community Leadership Committee:

- Members to comment as part of the consultation process.
- Present final draft to the CLC Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017.
- Hold a members workshop to consult on the VAWG and DVA Strategy.

Vision:

By 2020, identifying and preventing violence against women and girls is everyone's business where:

- Victims who suffer domestic violence and abuse feel confident in reporting it to us
- Victims are provided with the right services at the right time and in the right way
- Families are more resilient
- Fewer victims reach crisis point
- Perpetrators are held to account through enforcement, with the onus on them to change their behaviour.

Partnership Objectives:

1. **Preventing Violence against women and girls** by changing attitudes and behaviour that foster violence against women and girls and intervening earlier
2. **Improving outcomes for victims and their children** by intervening in the right way, at the right time with the right services building victim and family resilience to stop problems escalating to crisis point
3. **Holding perpetrators to account** through enforcement and putting the onus on them to change their behaviour
4. **Enhancing joint working practices** between agencies by understanding local need and providing a consistent, co-ordinated response to victims and their children

This report seeks the views of members on the vision, objectives and the approach proposed.

## Recommendations

1. That the Committee comment on the proposed
  - a) vision
  - b) partnership strategic objectives
  - c) approachfor Barnet's 2017-2020 VAWG & DVA strategy.
2. That the Committee note:
  - a) It will receive an annual report on the progress of the VAWG & DVA 2017-2020 strategy
3. That the Committee note the following commitment set out in the Home Office 2016-2020 Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy:  
‘Everyone in their local area will be able to hold their elected leaders to account through data on how local need is being met’
4. That the Committee note the actions proposed in 4.1 of the report

## **1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

- 1.1 Barnet Council's Community Safety Team are leading on the development of the new VAWG & DVA strategy for Barnet (2017-2020). This report shares the vision, partnership strategic objectives and approach proposed in the new strategy in order to seek the views of members of the Community Leadership Committee.
- 1.2 The strategy will set out how statutory partners, together with the voluntary and community organisations will prevent and respond to VAWG and DVA in Barnet from 2017 to 2020.
- 1.3 The overall outcomes we want to achieve by 2020 is a reduction in of VAWG & DVA in Barnet, matched by increased reporting, police referrals, prosecutions and convictions for what can still be hidden crimes. We want to see earlier intervention and prevention that builds victim and family resilience so that fewer victims reach crisis point with every victim (and their children) receiving the right support, at the right time, in the right way.

### Strategic Context

- 1.4 Addressing violence against women and girls is already recognised as a priority area regionally, nationally and internationally. The UN Declaration was adopted by the General Assembly in 1993. This was followed by a resolution of intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women in 2009. In 2010, the Mayor of London published 'The Way Forward'; a London-wide plan aimed to end all forms of violence against women in the capital and followed this with a refreshed strategy in 2013. The 2017-2020 Police and Crime Plan will also include a priority on tackling violence against women and girls'.
- 1.5 In March 2016, the Government published its 'Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2016 to 2020' which outlines their commitment to make tackling violence against women and girls everyone's business.
- 1.6 Locally this strategy will sit alongside a broader set of strategies and business plans including the Community Safety Strategy, Family Services Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy, Community Engagement Strategy, Adult Safe Guarding Business Plan and Children Safeguarding Business Plan.

## Definition of VAWG

- 1.7 Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) is both a form of discrimination and a violation of human rights. Locally we have adopted the United Nations Declaration on Elimination of Violence against Women<sup>1</sup>, which defines violence against women as:

*‘Any act of gender based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women [or girls], including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty’*  
(1993, Article 1)

- 1.8 The definition incorporates a wide range of abusive behaviours including physical, sexual, financial, emotional and psychological abuse.

It is important that Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) is not seen as a series of incidents or assaults which an individual experiences. Violence against women and girls describes violent and oppressive patterns of behaviour and practises, which achieve power and control over women and girls. It impacts on the physical safety, health and emotional well-being of individuals and impacts on families, carers, children and the community as a whole.

- 1.9 Violence against Women and Girls includes violence that is targeted at women or girls because of their gender or affects women and girls disproportionately.

Examples of this type of violence are:

- Sexual violence, abuse and exploitation
- Sexual harassment and bullying
- Stalking
- Trafficking and forced prostitution
- Domestic violence and abuse
- Coercive and controlling behaviour
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage (FM)
- Crime committed in the name of ‘honour’

## Proposed Partnership Objectives

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Declaration on Elimination of Violence towards Women (1993),  
<http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm> (last accessed 27.06.16)

### **Partnership Objective 1:**

#### **Prevent Violence against women and girls by changing attitudes and behaviour that foster violence against women and girls and intervening earlier**

- 1.10 Prevention and early intervention will be a core foundation of our approach to tackling VAWG, taking a life course approach to ensure all victims – and their families – have access to the right support at the right time to help them live free from violence and abuse. This will continue to increase victim confidence in reporting domestic violence and abuse and seeking support earlier.

#### *Schools and Education:*

- 1.11 We will continue to work with our schools and higher education establishments to educate young people and teenagers about healthy relationships, abuse and consent and raise awareness of key issues like 'sexting' and online manifestations of abuse.

#### *Protecting people online:*

- 1.12 We will consider any further local or national risk analysis on the use of online dating services by perpetrators to target and abuse women and to ensure the appropriate safety advice is provided and that all victims have the confidence to report these crimes. This includes raising the awareness of:
- The new law, introduced in 2015, making 'revenge porn' a specific criminal offence.
  - The dedicated 'revenge porn' helpline launched nationally
  - The Stop Online Abuse website established in 2015, providing practical advice for women and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGB&T) adults on how to recognise abuse, steps to take to report it and how to get online content removed.

#### *Challenging and responding to harmful practices: Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Honour Based Violence*

- 1.13 Locally we will continue to challenge the cultural attitudes that may underpin practices of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage (FM) and ensure professionals are supported and have the confidence to identify and confront these issues.
- 1.14 These crimes have historically been hidden and we want to ensure that more victims have the confidence to come forward to get the support they need and that perpetrators are brought to justice.
- 1.15 To do this, we must make sure that our local police and partnership response is as good as it can be and seeks the support of the central FGM and (FM) Unit that can share good practice and provide local outreach support.

- 1.16 Locally we will continue to care for survivors of FGM and take action to safeguard girls from harm. We will also monitor and understand the levels of FGM and forced marriages in Barnet.

*Earlier identification and intervention to prevent abuse*

- 1.17 We will make VAWG ‘everyone’s business’ across all agencies in Barnet and the wider public, ensuring women can seek help in a range of everyday settings as they go about their daily lives – for example with housing providers, job centres, community organisations and employers – and secure appropriate support from specialist victim services. Every point of interaction with a victim will be seen as an opportunity for intervention and not be missed.
- 1.18 Identifying victims and offenders at the earliest opportunity, intervening effectively to prevent violence and abuse from escalating and tackling high-rates of repeat victimisation and re-offending will be a key priority across the partnership.
- 1.19 We will also engage with the public through a number of awareness campaigns and consider new and emerging programmes for Barnet that will provide additional opportunities for victims of violence and abuse to receive the help they need at an earlier point.

*Moving to an integrated approach that builds on family and community resilience*

- 1.20 We recognise how domestic violence and abuse impacts on different family members and that stopping violence from escalating and reducing the harm to victims and their children is vital.
- 1.21 We will ensure that this happens more widely and consistently, and that we develop an approach where the risk and need identification for all members of a family takes place at the same time.
- 1.22 We will consider best and innovative practice<sup>2</sup> being developed elsewhere and locally where health, schools, and housing providers work together to identify and support victims and their families at an earlier stage and provide effective wrap-around support.

*The role of our Local Health Service*

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<sup>2</sup> For example, SafeLives’ ‘One Front Door’ and Women’s Aid’s ‘Change that Lasts’ models are two approaches based on providing a wrap-around package of care for victims and their families which can help transform how services are structured.

- 1.23 Abused women use health care services more than non-abused women and they identify health care workers as the professionals they would be most likely to speak to about their experience<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.24 GPs, midwives, health visitors, mental health, drug and alcohol services, sexual health and Accident and Emergency staff are all well placed to identify abuse. They have the opportunity to intervene early and direct victims to the most appropriate statutory and non-statutory services. The new NHS Mandate recognises the vital role of the NHS in tackling abuse and violence and expects NHS England to ensure the NHS helps to identify violence and abuse early and supports victims to get their lives back sooner.
- 1.25 We will continue to support our local health service, making it easier for the service to play their part in responding to VAWG & DVA. For example, funding and commissioning a local Identification & Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) model for Barnet.<sup>4</sup>
- 1.26 We will also continue to work closely with our mental health and substance misuse services to improve our local response to both victims and perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence.

*Women and girls affected or involved in gangs*

- 1.27 Women and girls can experience significant harm as a result of their association with gang members, including sexual violence and exploitation. Barnet Council's Family Services will continue to work with partners to address girls and gangs and child sexual exploitation through our local Gang's Strategy and Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy.

*Perpetrators: Changing behaviours to prevent abuse and re-offending*

- 1.28 A sustainable approach to preventing abuse is dependent on changing the attitudes and behaviours of perpetrators. Previously the evidence base for perpetrator interventions have been mixed. However, we recognise the importance of tackling perpetrators as the root cause of abuse, drawing on growing evidence base for their value as illustrated by the Mirabal project findings<sup>5</sup>.
- 1.29 Following a service review, in 2016, Barnet Council commissioned an adult and young person's domestic violence perpetrator programme. The outcomes of which, will be monitored by the boroughs VAWG & DVA Delivery Board.
- 1.30 Locally we expect to see an increased use of the range of protection orders available to tackle domestic abuse, forced marriage, sex offenders and those who pose a risk of sexual harm – these are critical tools for our frontline agencies to manage risk of and prevent offending.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.domesticviolencelondon.nhs.uk/uploads/downloads/DH\\_4126619.pdf](http://www.domesticviolencelondon.nhs.uk/uploads/downloads/DH_4126619.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> (IRIS) model in health practices - a domestic violence and abuse training, support and referral programme to support GPs in asking about and responding to such disclosures.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/criva/ProjectMirabalfinalreport.pdf>



## **Partnership Objective 2:**

### **Improve outcomes for victims and their children by intervening in the right way, at the right time, with the right services**

- 1.31 There will be a continued focus on improving outcomes for victims and their children by intervening in the right way, at the right time with the right services.
- 1.32 Embedding VAWG as every ones business and improving agency responses in identifying abuse at an earlier stage and supporting further increases in reporting will inevitably place a greater demand on local services.
- 1.33 There is no generic approach to providing services to victims of violence and abuse. Needs may be complex and may include, for example, housing provision, assistance with debt or support for mental health problems.
- 1.34 Provision will meet the needs of the diverse range of victims whether long term residents of Barnet or victims who have moved in more recently.
- 1.35 Specialist services responding to violence against women and girls are listed below.

#### *Central Government Funded Services*

Services funded by central government that support Barnet victims are:

- The North London Rape Crisis Service – supporting Barnet victims of rape
- Forced Marriage Unit – supporting victims and survivors of forced marriage
- National Domestic Violence Help Line – Providing advice and emergency accommodation for victims wanting to flee domestic violence

#### *Services Commissioned by Barnet Council*

- Refuge provision
- Independent Domestic Violence Advise
- Perpetrator Programmes (adults and young people)
- Barnet Domestic Violence multi-agency risk assessment panel (DV MARAC)
- Multi-agency training programme

#### *Services Commissioned by pooling of partnership budgets*

- IRIS programme (funding secured, to be commissioned)

#### *In-house specialist partnership services*

- Specialist Domestic Violence Court (led by our local court)

- Barnet One Stop Shop (led by Barnet Homes)
- Sanctuary Project (delivered by Barnet Homes)

### *Future commissioning*

- 1.36 Our commissioning will be based on our local needs assessment and the best available evidence of what works, innovating where necessary to meet new or complex challenges; We will involve local third sector organisations in commissioning, recognising that they have important insight into victims' needs, including those from BME backgrounds;
- 1.37 Where possible we will work together to pool budgets across different agencies to make the best use of available resources.
- 1.38 Our local strategic approach will support models of earlier integrated interventions with victims, perpetrators and their families, at the same time as maintaining crisis provision.
- 1.39 For most high risk victims at crisis point, refuge and rape crisis centres will continue to be provided as it is a proven source of support. But such services are only part of the answer. In order to meet the needs of our victims arising from increased disclosure and better early identification of abuse, we need to help more victims at the earliest opportunity and ensure fewer suffer repeat abuse.
- 1.40 Our services will also consider that women may travel far from home when fleeing violence, so we will work towards making our local provision open to all (recognising that some women from our own area are likely to seek support elsewhere). Our provision will be flexible to meet the needs of women therefore we will consider future opportunities of collaboration across local authority boundaries and services.
- 1.41 Commissioners across the local partnership will:
  - Understand what 'success' looks like for victims and their families and engage directly with victims themselves and consult with service providers;
  - Calculate the costs of VAWG on different agencies to support cross-sector buy-in to commissioning;
  - Support clearly defined outcomes and indicators based on prevention and early intervention; and
  - Understand their duties and responsibilities enshrined within the Equality Act 2010 and victims' legislation, which take account of the particular needs that black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME), LGB&T and disabled women may have and the barriers they may face.

### **Partnership Objective 3:**

**Hold perpetrators to account through enforcement and putting the onus on them to change their behaviour**

- 1.42 While we want to stop violence and abuse happening in the first place, where it does happen, perpetrators must be brought to justice. We will continue to ensure that effective sanctions are taken against perpetrators and that they are prevented from influencing children and other vulnerable people from becoming perpetrators in turn.
- 1.43 We will also support sustainable behaviour change and robust disruption to reduce re-offending. This will not be possible for all offenders but is a critical element in stopping the cycle of perpetrators moving from one victim to the next.
- 1.44 In investigating and prosecuting VAWG and DVA crimes, we will promote an even stronger focus on ensuring every report of violence and abuse is treated seriously from the time it is reported, every victim is treated with dignity, and every investigation and prosecution is conducted thoroughly and professionally. We will also ensure evidence-led prosecutions are the focus of our approach.
- 1.45 The introduction of the new domestic abuse offence of coercive or controlling behaviour in an intimate or family relationship should lead to a further increase in referrals and prosecutions for these offences.
- 1.46 The court process can be lengthy but victims may not be able, nor want, to proceed to that stage if their first experience of the criminal justice system is negative. It is imperative that the first response by the police to all victims, particularly those who are vulnerable, is right first time, every time.

*Supporting victims through the criminal justice system*

- 1.47 Victims of VAWG can find it challenging and often distressing going through the process of bringing an offender to justice.
- 1.48 The Serious Crime Act 2015 provides for the anonymity of victims of FGM, making it an offence to publish any matter that would be likely to lead members of the public to identify someone as the alleged victim. The prohibition lasts for the lifetime of the alleged victim. This could be an important factor in encouraging women to come forward due to the personal and sensitive nature of the offence.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> At the time of writing this strategy the government is also considering providing lifelong anonymity for victims of forced marriage.

- 1.49 Vulnerable victims and witnesses are also being provided with a greater opportunity to give evidence from a location away from the court.
- 1.50 While victim testimony is important, we must make sure that all the possible evidence is considered when building a case so that more evidence-led prosecutions can ensure perpetrators are brought to justice without victims needing to go through unnecessarily adversarial court procedures.
- 1.51 To support local victims in the criminal justice process and hold perpetrators to account, Barnet police will be using body-worn cameras to gather evidence at a domestic abuse incident. They will be used to record the behaviour of the offender, the responses of adult and child victims, and the scene itself. The cameras will be powerful sources of evidence in any prosecution
- 1.52 Ongoing contact with key workers and professionals, and being kept up to date with development of final outcomes has been highlighted by victims as something that they feel is very important. Better use of technology is allowing victims access to information about the status of their case.
- 1.53 For example, TrackMyCrime is a secure online system, hosted on police.uk which allows victims of crime to receive updates from the police on the investigation of their case. The system does not replace existing forms of communication, but provides greater choice for victims about when they receive an update on their case and how they interact with the police.

#### *Prostitution*

- 1.54 We remain committed to tackling the harm and exploitation that can be associated with prostitution, whilst giving those who want to leave prostitution every opportunity to find routes out.
- 1.55 Our priority in this context is public protection: people involved in prostitution can be particularly vulnerable to sexual and other violent crime, and may in fact be victims of child sexual exploitation or modern slavery.

#### *Supporting female offenders affected by violence and abuse*

- 1.56 We know that many victims of sexual, physical and emotional abuse can also be drawn into offending behaviour. The proportion of female prisoners that report experiencing some form of abuse during their childhood is twice as high as among male prisoners with many reporting that their offending was to support their partner or someone else's substance misuse.
- 1.57 Models where there is a more effective joined-up approach to addressing these complex needs are being developed. These models aim to develop a

whole system approach to managing female offenders which can help improve victim outcomes.

- 1.58 The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) published 'Better Outcomes for Women'<sup>7</sup> earlier this year which sets out the commissioning principles for developing services for women in the criminal justice system.
- 1.59 A new national helpline will also be rolled out for female offenders so that they can obtain support whilst in custody and on release. This follows a pilot helpline delivered at HMP Holloway by Women's Aid and Refuge.
- 1.60 Locally reducing re-offending is one of the key priorities of the Safer Communities Partnership Board (SCPB). This priority is delivered through a sub group of the SCPB – The Reducing Re-offending Delivery Group. Barnet also has in place an Integrated Offender Management Scheme – IOM, providing increased engagement and interventions with the most persistent offenders in Barnet. This group will ensure that Barnet female offenders of abuse can access the help they need to rebuild their lives and the break the cycle of offending.

#### *Sharing intelligence*

- 1.61 Sharing intelligence across agencies enables better protection of those who might be at risk. Border Force works closely with the police and airlines on joint FGM operations to target high risk flights and raise awareness, especially during the school holidays when girls may be most at risk. Border Force Officers, both in the UK and abroad, provide crucial extra intelligence and carry out additional checks on passengers in support of these operations.
- 1.62 In addition, Border Force's Safeguarding and Trafficking Teams have been given advanced training on FGM and forced marriage, including on what to look out for on the equipment which may be used to carry out FGM, so they have the right skills to spot potential perpetrators and deal sensitively with potential victims of FGM.

#### *Tackling online offending*

- 1.63 The internet has revolutionised how we communicate and share information but it has also been used as a vehicle for online abuse, harassment, bullying and stalking.
- 1.64 An 'online flag' allows police forces to record instances of crimes such as stalking and harassment taking place online. New questions in the Crime Survey for England and Wales mean that VAWG crimes with an online component will be identified. This data will be published in due course.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/achieving-better-outcomes-for-women-offenders>

- 1.65 Legislation to deal with internet trolls, cyber-stalking and harassment, and perpetrators of grossly offensive, obscene or menacing behaviour has been strengthened. The Government has also acted in response to new kinds of online offending, for example by introducing a new law making the fast growing incidence of 'revenge porn' a specific criminal offence.

**Objective 4:**

**Develop joint working practices between agencies to provide a consistent, co-ordinated response to victims and their children**

*Ensuring we remain an effective partnership*

- 1.66 Standing Together's 'Guide to effective domestic violence partnerships' provides a useful overview of what they found to be components of 'Excellent Partnerships' based on research with 10 partnerships across the UK<sup>8</sup>, including London.

Taking this into account the VAWG Delivery Board will ensure:

- We have shared objectives, vision, joint responsibility and equality between partners
- We have clear structures and governance in place where there is effective links with two way information flow, accountability and space for both strategic and operational input
- We have a partnership strategy and action plan setting out who is doing what and when and outputs and outcomes are measurable
- The partnership has good representation from all agencies where individuals/agencies including the voluntary sector provide effective leadership to respond to VAWG in Barnet
- We maximise the resource capacity and potential for investment
- There is clear co-ordination across the partnership supported by the Community Safety Team
- There is continuous training and a continuous commitment to effective change, raising awareness, raising awareness and skill development across the partnership workforce
- We use data to measure and define success
- We have partnership and agency specific policies, protocols and processes in place that make complex areas understandable and ensure continuous delivery
- We have specialist services to respond to VAWG that include services aimed at different risk levels and needs
- Our approach considers and meets the needs of Barnet's Diverse community
- Ensuring victims and survivors are consulted on all areas of the strategy and service provision

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<sup>8</sup> Standing Together Against Domestic Violence,.(2013), In Search of Excellence: A Guide to Effective Domestic Violence Partnerships.

### *Multi-agency working*

- 1.67 The multi-faceted and complex nature of VAWG means that it cannot be addressed by any one agency alone and requires a number of organisations in both the statutory services (Including health, local authorities, police, the Crown Prosecution Service and Probation) and voluntary and community services to work together.
- 1.68 Future inspections will consider how individual services contribute to keeping victims safe, but also the quality of the partnerships and the ways in which joint working is scrutinised. Multi-agency working also has a positive impact on tackling VAWG and it's a model that locally we will continue to develop.
- 1.69 We will develop a more integrated approach to multi-agency working that looks at victims, their families and perpetrators in the round where there is earlier intervention, building resilience, swifter, pre-emptive multi-agency action and risk identification for all members of a family at the same time.
- 1.70 Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)<sup>9</sup> are statutory and led by Barnet SCPB and co-ordinated by the Council's Community Safety Team as a multi-agency response to domestic violence and abuse. We will continue to promote learning from the two DHRs conducted in Barnet in 2015/2016.
- 1.71 In addition, a new FGM mandatory reporting duty that requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s to the police is now in force. The national multi-agency guidance for all frontline professionals on FGM will be reviewed and put on a statutory footing.
- 1.72 The aim of this statutory footing is to increase the number of referrals to the police, increase prosecutions<sup>10</sup> and help strengthen our understanding of this form of abuse. The VAWG Delivery Board will monitor the local implementation of this duty and the statutory guidance.
- 1.73 Effective multi-agency responses are also critical in managing adolescent to parent violence. An information guide is available to support police, youth justice, health, education, social care, safeguarding and housing service providers and practitioners to respond to and prevent adolescent to parent violence. We will ensure this is promoted locally.

### *Making VAWG 'everyone's Business'<sup>11</sup>*

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revised-statutory-guidance-for-the-conduct-of-domestic-homicide-reviews>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>

<sup>11</sup> Taken from the HMIC report in domestic abuse: <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wpcontent/uploads/2014/04/improving-the-police-response-to-domestic-abuse.pdf>

- 1.74 A recent Home office review of services indicated that around 85% of victims of domestic abuse seek help from professionals at least five times before getting the support they need.<sup>12</sup>
- 1.75 It is vital that locally, better use is made of these critical opportunities for identification and support.
- 1.76 We will make VAWG ‘everyone’s business’ across all agencies and the wider public, ensuring women can seek help in a range of everyday settings as they go about their daily lives – for example with housing providers, job centres and employers – and secure appropriate support from specialist victim services. Every point of interaction with a victim will be seen as an opportunity for intervention and not be missed.

### *Domestic Abuse and Housing*

- 1.77 A housing officer may be a victim’s first port of call and are ideally placed to identify those carrying out domestic abuse and also those at risk, including children. We will continue to support local housing professionals so they have the necessary knowledge and skills to recognise domestic abuse at an early stage and help victims get the right support quickly so that residents can live safely and free from abuse.

### *Public transport*

- 1.78 The Government, in partnership with the British Transport Police (BTP) commissioned a Rapid Evidence Assessment entitled ‘What works in reducing sexual harassment and sexual offending on public transport nationally and internationally?’ to provide greater safety for women and girls. One outcome was the ‘report it to stop it’ campaign, which is encouraging more active engagement from bystanders and will be supported by a wider range of technological options to improve mechanisms for reporting. We will work with our local British Transport Police to understand the prevalence of this in Barnet transport networks, ensure there is a local response in place and our local public transport remains a safe mode of travel for our women and girls.

## Delivering the Strategy

### *Governance*

- 1.79 This strategy will be overseen by Barnet’s VAWG & DVA Delivery Board - a sub group of Barnet’s Safer Communities Partnership Board (the statutory board overseeing delivery of Barnet’s Community Safety Partnership Plan, which includes a priority on responding to and preventing violence against women and girls).

### *Measuring Success*

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<sup>12</sup> Review led by Department of Communities and Local Government



- 1.80 The VAWG DVA Delivery Board will agree a set of partnership indicators that will measure and define success and be reported to the VAWG and DVA Board quarterly. High level indicators will also be reported to the Safer Communities Partnership Board quarterly with a proposed annual report to the Community Leadership Committee.

*Co-ordinating Delivery*

- 1.81 A three year (2017-2020) partnership action plan will support this strategy setting out who is doing what and when and providing measureable outputs and outcomes.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Home Office 'Ending Violence Against Girls' Strategy (2016-2020) sets out the government's vision, which includes:

*'Everyone in a local area will be able to hold their elected leaders to account through data on how local need is being met.'*

Views of the Community Leadership Committee will therefore be sought in the development of this strategy and it will be provided an annual report on progress of the VAWG strategy which will set out:

- Progress made in delivering the partnership objectives in the strategy
- Performance based on the key performance indicators agreed to measure successful outcomes for victims and their families
- Further funding secured to deliver services locally
- Results of local needs analysis – which will be conducted as part of the Strategic Crime Needs Analysis

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 Not relevant in relation to this report.

## **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

### **4.1 The following actions will be taken:**

#### November 2016 to February 2017:

- Consultation (statutory partners, voluntary community organisations, victims, survivors and perpetrators).
- An equalities impact assessment conducted.
- Multi-agency key performance indicators agreed to measure performance and outcomes of the strategy.
- 2017/2018 multi-agency action plan developed.

#### 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017:

- A final draft presented to the Community Leadership Committee.

#### 22 March 2017:

- A final draft agreed by the VAWG and DVA Delivery Board.

#### 28 April 2017:

- The final strategy agreed by the Safer Communities Partnership Board.

#### May 2017:

On the council website supported by annual communications plan

## **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

The VAWG strategy is in line with a number of areas set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2020, including:

- Barnet will be amongst the safest places in London.
- The Council will take a partnership approach to preventing Domestic Violence through a co-ordinated service provision to those at high risk of repeat victimisation.
- The Council, working with local, regional and national partners, will strive to ensure that Barnet is a place where people are helped to help themselves, recognising prevention is better than cure
- By 2020 services will be commissioned jointly for the borough – by pooling resources and expertise from across the Council, NHS, Job centre, police, education providers and other partners from across the public, private and voluntary sector to create truly integrated services.

## 5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

The council's annual budget for DV and VAWG services is £771,210.00. This covers two posts and a commissioning budget of £650,806.02. Families Services also commission a young people's perpetrators programme listed under commissioned service 3 and 4 from their departmental budget.

	<b>Commission</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Over 4 years prior to savings (£)</b>	<b>Savings over 4 years (£)</b>
1	Advocacy services	Community Safety Team	£1,073,432	£48,616
2	Refuge Services	Community Safety Team	£1,099,221	£276,039
3	Perpetrator Services	Community Safety Team	£430,570	Reduction in unit costs
4	Risk Assessors	Family Services	£140,000	Reduction in unit costs
5	DV MARAC (new commission)	Community Safety Team	£35,000	New commission

The perpetrator Services and Risk Assessors are spot purchased as and when needed so not a block contract, with early intervention. Any savings made in the re-commission will be re-invested into VAWG and DVA.

Barnet Homes in partnership with the council Jewish Women's Aid submitted a bid to the 2015-16 Department For Communities and Local Government (DCLG - Strengthening accommodation based specialist domestic abuse service provision) were awarded £100,000. This was one year's funding for the One Stop Shop and the additional refuge spaces. Once the funding came to an end, in 2016/2017 Barnet Homes agreed to allocate the refuge rental income to be used to fund the refuge. For 2017/2018 the funding for the refuge will be an approximate shortfall of £70,000 and the One Stop Shop a further approximate £30,000.

Barnet Homes will be submitting a bid to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)<sup>13</sup> to secure 2 years of funding for the refuge and a separate bid to the Prevention Trailblazer Fund<sup>14</sup> for the One Stop Shop. Apart from these two funding streams, if funding is not secured for the refuge, Barnet Homes will no longer be able to providing a refuge service post March 2017. The OSS is being run on the good will of all partners and there are issues of capacity in terms of administering/managing the service which

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-20-million-fund-now-open-to-help-victims-of-domestic-abuse>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-prevention-programme>

means that a dedicated part time coordinator is required to continue to support, monitor and publicise the good work of the OSS as an effective early intervention and prevention tool. Bar the council there are currently no other funding streams that Barnet Homes can explore to support these services. Community Safety is working with Barnet Homes to identify options to cover any funding shortfall

Partnership budgets are not included in this paper, however we would like the committee to note the positive contributions made by all partners both financial, operationally and strategically. However, the strategy will set out the budgets for VAWG across the partnership.

Sylvia Walbys<sup>15</sup> report estimates that providing public services to victims of domestic violence and the lost economic output of women affected costs the UK £15.8 billion annually. The cost to health, housing and social services, criminal justice and civil and legal services is estimated at £3.9 billion. In Barnet reported violent and sexual crime against women counts for an estimated 28% of the total cost of crime on the borough: amounting to an average of £20.7 million per year. Therefore a collaborative, multi-agency approach to tackling violence and abuse is essential.

In 2017 the government will also launch a dedicated Service Transformation Fund, to encourage new approaches, and establish and embed the best ways to help victims, and their families, and prevent perpetrators from re-offending.

Partners have also pooled resources of £87k to fund the IRIS project – A GP identification and training programme.

### **5.3 Social Value**

Not relevant in relation to this report.

### **5.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

5.4.1 S6 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 ('the 1998 Act') places a statutory duty on responsible authorities (including local authorities, the Police, Probation

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<sup>15</sup> Walby, S (2009), The Cost of Domestic Violence Up-date 2009 Lancaster University

Trusts, and Fire and Rescue Authorities) to formulate and implement strategies for the reduction of crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour), for combating the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances; and for the reduction of reoffending.

5.4.2 The BSCP is a Community Safety Partnership set up in accordance with the requirement of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2009.

5.4.3 Under s.17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, it is also a duty of the Council (and other partner agencies, including police, fire & rescue, GLA, TfL) when exercising its functions to have due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour), misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances and re-offending.

5.4.4 The Police and Justice Act 2006 states that every local authority shall ensure that it has a crime and disorder overview and scrutiny committee with power to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of crime and disorder functions and to make reports or recommendations to the local authority or its executive with respect to the discharge of those functions. The Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 complement these provisions and are supported by Home Office guidance. Barnet operates a committee system form of governance and consequently does not have overview and scrutiny committees. However, the duty to perform crime and disorder scrutiny remains a requirement in committee system authorities. As such, Barnet have elected that the Community Leadership Committee to be the committee responsible for discharging responsibilities relating to the scrutiny of crime and disorder matters.

5.4.5 Responsibility for Functions, Annex A, in the council's Constitution sets out the Terms of Reference of the Community Leadership Committee which includes:

- To contribute to achieving better outcomes in the Safer Communities Strategy through CCTV, fighting crime and anti-social behaviour, combating graffiti fly-tipping and other environmental crime, action against Domestic Violence and any other relevant Council activity. To work together with partners on the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership including Police, Fire and Criminal Justice Agencies to help make Barnet a safer place.
- Provide scrutiny aspect of Community Safety

## 5.5 Risk Management

- 5.5.1 Risk management varies according to the different initiatives. The partnership or appropriate agencies are made aware of risks and actions to mitigate the risk are agreed and put in place. There is always risk that the partnership may not achieve the targets set due to factors outside its direct control – however there is strong partnership working in place enabling agencies to identify and highlight risk and be open to addressing the risk collectively.

## 5.6 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.6.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the public sector equality duty to which the authority must have due regard. The Council's public sector equality duty is set out in s149 of the Equality Act 2010:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to —

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Although the focus of this strategy is on supporting women and girls, we acknowledge men and boys will also experience and be affected by the range of issues that encompass VAWG. It is important to ensure appropriate service responses are in place to support male victims, as gender may be an additional barrier to seeking help. Men and boys who are victims of or are impacted by this type of violence are included in all aspects of our strategy, particularly our prevention and awareness raising work. We hope to engage more men and boys in this through working closely with [www.whiteribboncampaign.org.uk](http://www.whiteribboncampaign.org.uk)

We are committed to ensuring that **any** victim of Domestic Violence and Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls receives a sensitive and appropriate response so that they get the help and support they need

We also acknowledge that DV and VAWG disproportionately affects women and girls, and our response is tailored accordingly, ensuring our strategy follows a victims/survivors centred approach.

Other groups of people who may experience additional barriers to seeking help include those from black, Asian, minority, ethnic and refugee (BAMER) communities, disabled victims, elderly victims, the LGBT community, those

with no recourse to public funds, those with complex needs and/or substance users and those under the age of 18 years old. We will seek to ensure that our services are able to meet individuals' needs in a sensitive and consistent manner. This will be carried out in line with the relevant legislation

- 5.6.2 The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.
- 5.6.3 The Community Safety Strategic Assessment, community safety consultation and the services delivered to victims of crime and ASB take into account the protected characteristics to ensure services are accessible and fair to all sections of the community.
- 5.6.4 The Community Safety Strategy will have a positive impact on groups affected by equalities issues as the Strategy recognises that crime and anti-social behaviour is generally underreported; especially in the case of Hate Crime and Domestic Violence and Abuse. To address this issue the Strategy promotes measures to encourage and support victims to report crimes so that appropriate action can be taken to reduce the risks to the victim and stop the harmful behaviour which is causing the victim concern.
- 5.6.5 Each of the priorities in the Safer Communities Strategy has equalities dimension to it as it may impact on communities in different ways. The performance management of these priorities considers disproportionality of victims or offenders as it relates to equalities and diversity, building on the data contained in the annual strategic crime needs assessment.

## **5.7 Consultation and Engagement**

Consultation with statutory partners, community and voluntary organisations, victims and survivors will take place between November 2016 – February 2017

## **5.8 Insight**

Not relevant in relation to this report.

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

11 March 2014

Agenda item 10: Crime and Disorder Scrutiny

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=119&MID=7470#A6563>

Agenda item 10: Update report on Domestic Violence and the police

[https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s24006/DV\\_VAWG%20Update%20CLC%20FINAL%2024JUNE2015.pdf](https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s24006/DV_VAWG%20Update%20CLC%20FINAL%2024JUNE2015.pdf)

9<sup>th</sup> March 2016

Agenda Item 9: Annual update on the 2016 Community Safety Strategic Assessment

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s30235/Final%20Update%20on%20the%202016%20Community%20Safety%20Strategic%20Assessment.pdf>

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s30236/Appendix%201%20201516%20Action%20Plan%20Review%202.pdf>

24 June 2015

Agenda item 10: An update on Domestic Violence and Violence against Women and Girls

[https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s24006/DV\\_VAWG%20Update%20CLC%20FINAL%2024JUNE2015.pdf](https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s24006/DV_VAWG%20Update%20CLC%20FINAL%2024JUNE2015.pdf)