

Report Name:	Preventing and Responding to Violence against Women and Girls & Domestic Abuse (VAWG & DA) - Annual Report (2018/2019)	
Meeting:	Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board (SCPB)	
Meeting Date:	26 th July 2019	
Enclosures:	n/a	
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Outcome Required:	Feedback required	
Restricted	No	

Summary

This report provides the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board (BSCP) with an update on the delivery and implementation of the Barnet Violence Against Women and Girls 2017-2020 Strategy.

The Barnet Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2017-2020 sets out how the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership (BSCP) works to prevent and respond Domestic Abuse, and underlines the partnership's commitment to working together to prevent all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG).

The Community Leadership Committee (CLC) endorsed the *Barnet VAWG strategy 2017-2020* on the 21st June 2017 and the Leader of the Council formally launched the VAWG strategy on the 8th March 2018, which was International Women's Day.

Recommendations

1. That the Safer Communities Partnership Board note and comment on the progress made by the Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership Delivery Group (a sub group of the BSCP) on delivering the four priority objectives of the Barnet Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2017-2020.

WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The Barnet Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2017-2020 sets out how the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership works to prevent and respond Domestic Abuse and underlines the partnership's commitment to working together to prevent all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG).
- 1.2 The Community and Leadership Committee (CLC) endorsed the *Barnet VAWG strategy 2017-2020* on the 21st June 2017.
- 1.3 The delivery of the Barnet VAWG strategy is overseen by the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board ('BSCP'). This is in line with the responsibility of the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership ('BSCP' or 'the Partnership') for producing and implementing an overall partnership strategy for reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 1.4 Within the overall Barnet Community Safety Strategy 2015-2020, one of the seven priority objectives is that: *"The Safer Communities Partnership prevents violence against women and girls, improves outcomes for victims and their children and holds perpetrators to account."*
- 1.5 The Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership Delivery Group (a sub group of the BSCP) brings together partner organisations in the borough so that they can work together to respond to VAWG with the aim of preventing it and reducing the harm it causes to victims, their families and the wider community. This group agrees an annual VAWG delivery plan setting out the key partnership activities required, in order to deliver against the four partnership priorities within the Barnet VAWG strategy.
- 1.6 The four partnership priorities within the Barnet VAWG strategy are:
 - Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls
 - Improving outcomes for victims and their children
 - Holding perpetrators to account
 - Enhancing joint working practices between agencies

Background context

1.7 Performance

- Barnet's rate of domestic violence and abuse is 13 per 1,000 population. This is the 3rd lowest rate of the 32 London boroughs.¹
- There were 792 Domestic Abuse Violence with Injury offences recorded by the police in Barnet in 2018/19² (an increase of 5.6% compared to the previous year).
- In the 12 months between April 2018 and March 2019 in Barnet 373 suspects were identified and proceeded against by police³. This equates to a Sanction Detection Rate of 13% (down from 18% a year ago).
- During the same period, for Violence with Injury Domestic Abuse offences, 134 suspects were identified and proceeded against by police. This equates to a Sanction Detection Rate of 17%, down from 23% a year ago.
- Over the last 12 months⁴ (2018/19) the Domestic Abuse MARAC has received 402 referrals of high risk cases of domestic abuse.

1.8 An assessment of the DA MARAC referrals over a 12-month period⁵ showed that:

- 32% of victims are aged between 31-40 years old (up from 28% a year ago)
- 98% of victims referred to Domestic Abuse MARAC are female
- 95% of perpetrators at the Domestic Abuse MARAC are male
- 21% of victims in the cohort had a mental health issue (up from 17% a year ago), 6% had an alcohol misuse issue, and 2% had a drugs misuse issue
- 16% of perpetrators had a mental health issue (down from 18% a year ago), 15% had an alcohol misuse issue, and 12% had a drugs misuse issue.
- 7.5% of cases involved child to parent violence (compared to 9% a year ago)

Partnership activity highlights

¹ 12 months up to March 2019.

² 12 months up to March 2019

³ I.e. either charged or proceeded against in some other way (e.g. cautioned, or receiving another sanction such as Formal Warnings, Penalty Notices)

⁴ 12 months up to March 2019

⁵ 12 months to March 2019

1.9 Partnership work delivered under the Barnet VAWG Strategy has included:

- Barnet Council's continued funding of specialist services for victims of DA and VAWG; this includes refuge provision, IDVA Services and the Domestic Abuse MARAC
- Between April 2018 and March 2019 Solace Women's Aid received 1169 referrals to Barnet's IDVA service, up from 1144 in the previous year; 173 women and children supported in the Barnet refuge service; and our DA MARAC, delivered by Hestia, received 402 referrals with 333 children within these households
- Barnet council commission RISE Mutual CLC to deliver an adult and young people's perpetrator service to support perpetrators in changing their behaviour. Between April 2018 and March 2019, 42 adult perpetrators received interventions under the Perpetrator Behaviour Change programs
- Barnet's One Stop Shop (OSS) is a drop-in service for early intervention and advice for victims of Domestic Abuse. The OSS which is delivered by Barnet Homes (with partners including Barnet council, Victim Support, Jewish Women's Aid, Solace Women's Aid, private solicitor firms, Barnet Magistrate and Cyber Care) has provided advice and support to 486 victims of Domestic Abuse in the 12 months to March 2019.

2 DELIVERING THE VAWG STRATEGY IN 2018/2019

2.1 The following section provides an update on the partnership activities delivered under the 2018/19 VAWG delivery plan, taking each of the four Barnet VAWG Strategy priorities in turn:

- Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls
- Improving outcomes for victims and their children
- Holding perpetrators to account
- Enhancing joint working practices between agencies

Priority: Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls

2.2 This priority aims to prevent violence against women and girls by focusing on changing attitudes and behaviour that foster violence against women and girls, and by intervening earlier.

2.3 Some of the key partnership activities that have been delivered or have taken place during 2018/19 to make this happen have been:

- VAWG Training
- An awareness raising campaign
- A Healthy relationships education programme
- Signing up to the Chartered Institute of Housing's "Make a Stand pledge"

VAWG Training

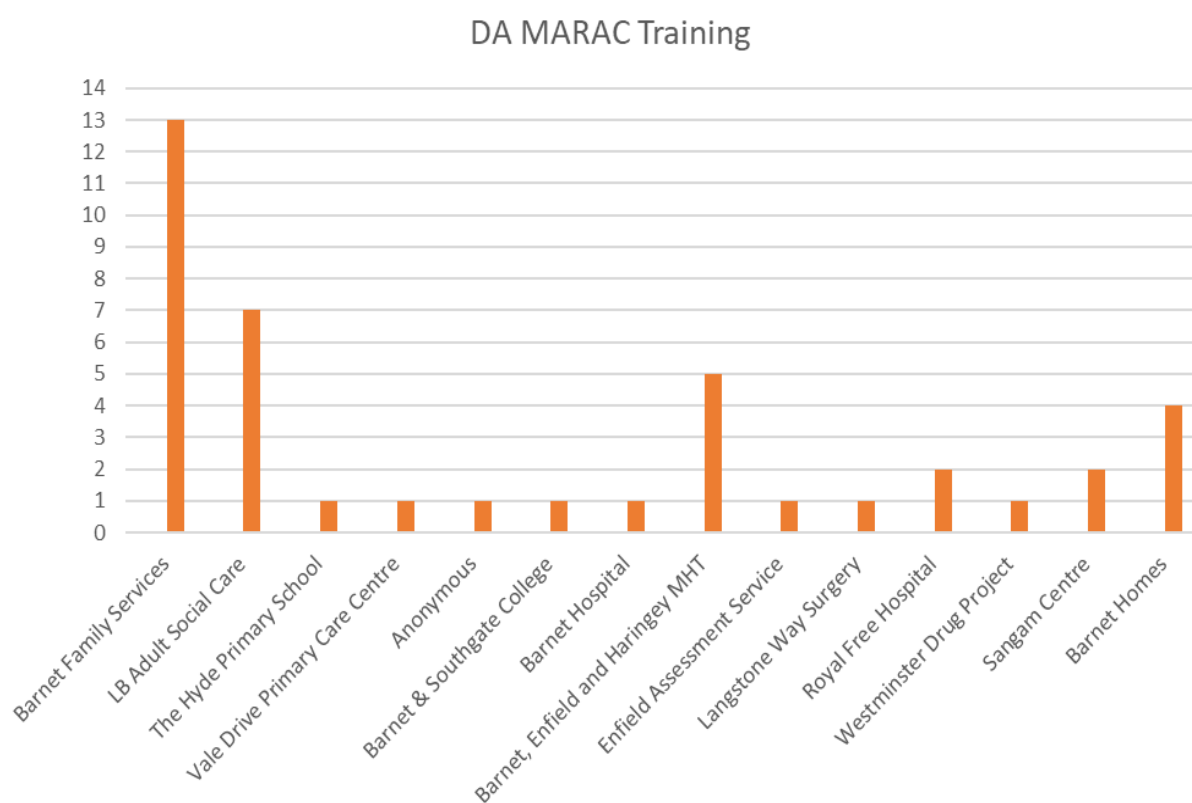
2.4 A Partnership VAWG Skills and Training Needs analysis was conducted and an annual VAWG Partnership Training Plan was developed for 2018/19. The training plan sought to foster an approach across the partnership whereby every encounter with a service user experiencing or perpetrating domestic abuse would be made to count, and be seen as an opportunity for an intervention.

Table 1: Training participation

Training Course	Attendance numbers
MARAC	34
Getting to grips with coercive control	25
Online domestic abuse & sexual awareness	117
Domestic abuse & sexual violence (DA & SV) – Level 2	41
Total	217

- 2.5 The 217 attendees came from over 45 different service areas and partner agencies, including Family Services, Adult Social care and Barnet Homes as well as other statutory and non-statutory partnership agencies.
- 2.6 Barnet homes have made the Online Domestic Abuse and sexual awareness training compulsory for front line professionals. As a result, the uptake of this course has increased considerably.
- 2.7 Breakdown of attendance at the DA MARAC training during 2018/19:

Table 2: DV MARAC Training attendance by partners



Awareness raising campaigns

- 2.8 The partnership VAWG Communications plan has overseen the delivery of a publicity campaign focused on raising awareness about Domestic Abuse, the unacceptability of abusive behaviour, and encouraging people to report domestic abuse.
- 2.9 The partnership was successful in a bid to the Home Office to fund a 1-day event on FGM, forced marriage and honour based violence. This multi-agency event took place on the 27th November 2018 with over 100 attendees, including the Mayor of Barnet. Subsequently, and as a

result of group discussions held at this conference, a multi-agency working group was formed (lead by the Barnet Children Safeguarding Partnership). This working group has been developing a *Harmful Practices* strategy and action plan.

2.10 In addition, the Children Workforce Development team has secured funding (in March 2019) for a one-day awareness campaign in Barnet focused on 'Supporting victims of modern day slavery, human trafficking and prostitution'. The campaign will take place during 2019/20.

2.11 An awareness training on Clare's Law- Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) was held in December 2018 for all MARAC members. The aim is to increase awareness of the scheme allowing anyone with concerns the Right to Ask & Right to Know on previous violence committed by partners so they can make an informed choice.

In 2018/19, eleven disclosures were requested to Barnet Police and five were declined.

Healthy relationships education programme

2.12 A Healthy Relationships training programme has been developed for schools in Barnet. The training focuses on educating young people about healthy relationships and about abuse (including online-abuse) and reinforces the importance of respect and consent in relationships.

2.13 A number of schools have responded to a school circular, expressing interest in receiving the training. IKWRO⁶ have delivered the programme to year 5 and year 6 at Chalgrove Primary School. It is envisaged that training sessions at other schools will be delivered during 2019/20

Make a Stand pledge

2.14 Barnet Homes has signed the Chartered Institute of Housing's "Make a Stand pledge" as a demonstration of Barnet Homes ongoing commitment to supporting people experiencing domestic abuse. In connection with this pledge, Barnet Homes will designate an individual at a senior level to champion the activities delivered by Barnet Homes which support victims and challenge perpetrators of Domestic Abuse and to promote the #MakeaStand pledge campaign.

⁶ Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation

- 2.15 This priority aims to improve outcomes for victims and their children by focusing on intervening in the right way, at the right time, with the right services.
- 2.16 Some of the key partnership activities that have been delivered or have taken place during 2018/19 to make this happen have been:
- Women's refuge provision
 - Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) service provision
 - Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
 - Securing funding for a Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) project
 - Barnet Sanctuary Scheme

Women's refuge provision

- 2.17 Solace Women's Aid are commissioned by the Barnet Council to provide two women's refuges for Barnet. A third women's refuge (Minerva House) is run by Barnet homes. Barnet Homes has been successful in securing £161,770 of funding from the MHCLG to support the continuation the Minerva House provision in 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- 2.18 Minerva House supports women who approach Barnet Homes fleeing domestic abuse. It provides victims with supported refuge accommodation and thereby can sometimes help avoid victims being isolated in temporary accommodation far away from their support networks.

Table 3: Refuge provision in Barnet for 2018/2019

Refuge	Bed space	Support provided in 2018/19
Minerva House	6 bed spaces	Supported 20 women and 18 children
Hannah House and Arlene House	18 bed spaces	Supported 63 women and 72 children fleeing domestic abuse

IDVA service provision

2.19 During 2018/19 the Solace Women's Aid IDVA service in Barnet supported 1169 new service users, up from 1144 in 2017/18.

Table 4: DV referrals to Solace Advocacy Project

Date period	2018/2019 Q1	2018/2019 Q2	2018/2019 Q3	2018/2019 Q4
Number of Solace Referrals	273	297	280	319

- 2.20 The top five sources of referrals into the Advocacy service during this period (by volume) were: the Domestic Abuse MARAC (19%), Self-referrals, Family and Friends (17%), the Police (15%), the One Stop Shop (13%) and Family Services (9%).
- 2.21 A review of the IDVA services was conducted in March 2019. The aim of the review was to ensure our IDVA services are accessible and delivered at the right place and right time to meet local demand as well as identifying areas where increased IDVA support was required for victims. The recommendations of this review, which will help inform decisions about the allocation and deployment of IDVAs are now being finalised.
- 2.22 In addition to the locally commissioned IDVA service, MOPAC commission Victim Support to provide an uplift in IDVAs across London. This provision is called the *Integrated Victims and Witnesses Service*. MOPAC have recently completed a review and re-organisation of the allocation of the Victim Support IDVAs to align the provision with the new the Police BCUs (Basic Command Units).
- 2.23 As a result of this exercise there will be one Victim Support IDVA based jointly between Colindale and Wembley police stations, one based within Barnet Hospital, and two IDVAs aligned to the criminal justice system to support victims through the criminal justice process, including attendance at court.

Domestic Abuse MARAC

- 2.24 Over the last 12 months (2018/19) the Domestic Abuse MARAC has received 402 referrals of high risk cases of domestic abuse. The main sources of referrals to the Domestic Abuse MARAC are the Solace Advocacy project, Police and Victim Support.
- 2.25 To improve the quality of referrals, information sharing and multi-agency risk management at the Domestic Abuse MARAC, a quality assurance panel is being set up. This panel will review two DA MARAC cases each quarter to identify learning points. The first meeting of the panel (the Barnet MARAC Quality Assurance Panel) will be in June 2019.

Securing funding for an FGM project

- 2.26 The Partnership has secured a grant of £10,135 from MHCLG⁷ in March 2019 to improve outcomes and support for victims of FGM in the borough. The funding will support both the VAWG delivery plan and the Harmful Practices action plan to provide FGM awareness raising training to staff across the partnership.

Barnet Sanctuary Scheme

- 2.27 The Barnet Homes Sanctuary Scheme helps victims of domestic abuse, who live in Barnet, to remain in their own home, if it is safe to do so, by increasing the security at their home. In the last year, 60 homes received crime prevention security measures under the Sanctuary scheme.

⁷ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Priority: Holding perpetrators to account

- 2.28 This priority aims to hold perpetrators to account through enforcement, and placing the onus on perpetrators to change their behaviour.
- 2.29 Some of the key partnership activities that have been delivered or have taken place during 2018/19 to make this happen have been:
- Perpetrator programme for Behaviour change
 - Young Person Perpetrators programme
 - Investigation and Enforcement action
 - Tackling online offending

Perpetrator programme for Behaviour change

- 2.30 Barnet Council commissions Rise Mutual to deliver a domestic abuse perpetrator programme in Barnet aimed at reducing re-offending and repeat victimisation. The programme uses proven evidence-based models for behaviour change. They help perpetrators to take positive and tangible steps to prevent re-offending.
- 2.31 During 2018/19 - 42 adult perpetrators received interventions under the Perpetrator Behaviour Change programs.

Young Person Perpetrators programme

- 2.32 There has been an increase in the number of referrals to the Domestic Abuse MARAC which relate to cases of child to parent violence. During 2018/19 - 7.5% of the Domestic Abuse MARAC cases related to violence perpetrated by a son or daughter towards their parent.
- 2.33 Rise Mutual delivers a Young Person Perpetrator programme in Barnet. This programme provides one-to-one and group interventions for young people who have been involved in abusive relationships of child to parent violence.
- 2.34 The Child to Parent Violence one -to-one programme is for 11 to 18-year olds. The Respect and Principles (RAP) Programme is for 13 to 18-year-old males who have been involved in adolescent intimate relationship abuse.

Investigation and Enforcement

- 2.35 In the 12 months between April 2018 and March 2019, in Barnet 373 domestic abuse suspects were identified and proceeded against by police⁸. This equates to a Sanction Detection Rate of 13% (down from 18% a year ago).
- 2.36 During the same period for Violence with Injury Domestic Abuse offences, 134 suspects were identified and proceeded against by police. This equates to a Sanction Detection Rate of 17% (down from 23% a year ago).
- 2.37 The Domestic Abuse Sanction Detection rate has fallen across London, not only in Barnet. Police have a number of actions in place aimed at increasing the Domestic Abuse Sanction Detection rate. These include a plan for the improved use of Body Worn Cameras to secure evidence.
- 2.38 The Body worn cameras being used by Barnet Police to gather evidence at a domestic abuse incidents, record the behaviour of the offender, the response of adult and child victims, and the scene itself. This evidence can then support witnesses by providing evidence-led prosecutions to help ensure perpetrators are brought to justice.

Tackling online offending

- 2.39 Online domestic abuse includes such offences as stalking and harassment. Cyber Care UK participates in the weekly Barnet Domestic Abuse One Stop, providing face to face support to victims of domestic abuse along with advice, and practical help to safeguard against online abuse. In the last year, at the one OSS in Barnet, Cyber Care UK has supported **27** victims of cyber abuse.

⁸ I.e. either charged or proceeded against in some other way (e.g. cautioned, or receiving another sanction such as Formal Warnings, Penalty Notices)

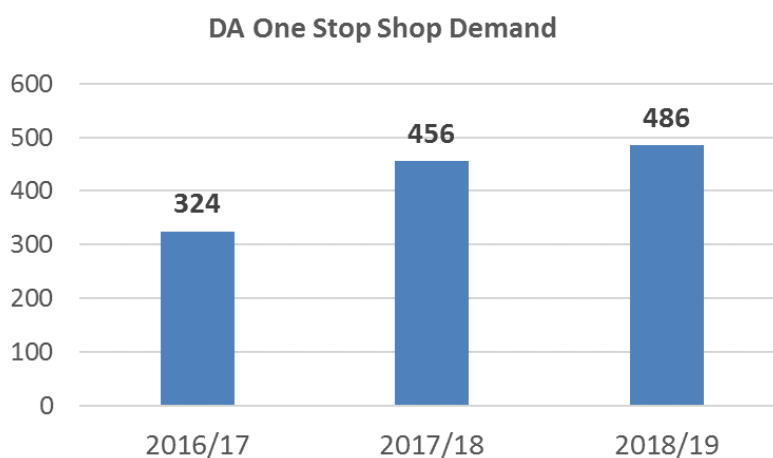
Priority: Enhancing joint working practices between agencies

- 2.40 This priority aims to prevent violence against women and girls by developing joint working practices to provide a consistent, co-ordinated response to victims and their children
- 2.41 Some of the key partnership activities that have been delivered or have taken place during 2018/19 to make this happen have been:
- The Barnet Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop
 - Delivery of the Barnet IRIS project
 - Safeguarding Children in Barnet through Operation Encompass
 - Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)
 - Governance arrangements for the delivery of the VAWG Strategy

The Barnet Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop

- 2.42 Barnet's One Stop Shop (OSS) is a drop-in service for early intervention and advice for victims of DA and VAWG. The OSS which is delivered by Barnet Homes (with partners including Barnet council, Victim Support, Jewish Women's Aid, Solace Women's Aid, private solicitor firms, Barnet Magistrate, Latin American Women Association, Sangam, Asian Women Resource Centre and Cyber Care) has provided advice and support to **486** victims of Domestic Abuse in the 12 months to March 2019. This is an increase from **456** in 2017/18 and **324** in 2016/17.

Table 5: One Stop Shop demand



2.43 In addition to bringing together a breadth of partnership expertise to support victims of Domestic Abuse the OSS receives referrals from a wide range of agencies across the partnership – during the last 12 months over 17 different agencies or organisations made referrals into the OSS.

Delivery of the IRIS⁹ project

2.44 The project started in February 2018, by April 2019, 18 GP Surgeries have received training, of which 11 are now fully trained.

2.45 Feedback about the impact of the IRIS project, from the GP practices has been positive and this has been reflected in a marked change in the rate of Domestic Abuse referrals from those surgeries. Of the GP surgeries to have receive training the number of Domestic Abuse referrals has increased from 4 per year prior to the IRIS training to 44 referrals in the period after the training was delivered. Joint partnership funding has been agreed to continue to deliver this project in 2019/2020 where a further 25 GP surgeries will be targeted. Funding has been provided by Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), NHS England, Barnet Community Safety Team(LBB) and Public Health.

Safeguarding Children in Barnet through Operation Encompass (Metropolitan Police)

2.46 Operation Encompass has been introduced into Barnet. This initiative focuses on strengthening the information sharing to better support children who have been victims or witness of domestic abuse. Operation Encompass directly connects the police with schools to secure better outcomes for children who are subject or witness to police-attended incidents of domestic abuse. Rapid provision of support within the school environment means children are better safeguarded against the short-, medium- and long-term effects of domestic abuse.¹⁰

⁹ IRIS stands for: 'Identification and Referral to Improve Safety'. Its aim is to improve awareness among GP practices around domestic abuse and thereby to increase the early identification (and appropriate referral) of victims of domestic abuse by primary care practitioners.

¹⁰ <https://www.operationencompass.org/>

Partnership action for Domestic Homicides Reviews(DHR)

2.47 Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) were established on a statutory basis in 2011 under section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004).¹¹

- Barnet Council is currently conducting 4 DHRs as per the statutory guidance.
- Currently the multi-agency partnership is promoting the early learning from the findings of first 2 DHRs in order to improve responses. Upon completion and sign off the DHRs, Barnet VAWG Delivery Group will monitor the implementation of the recommendations.¹²

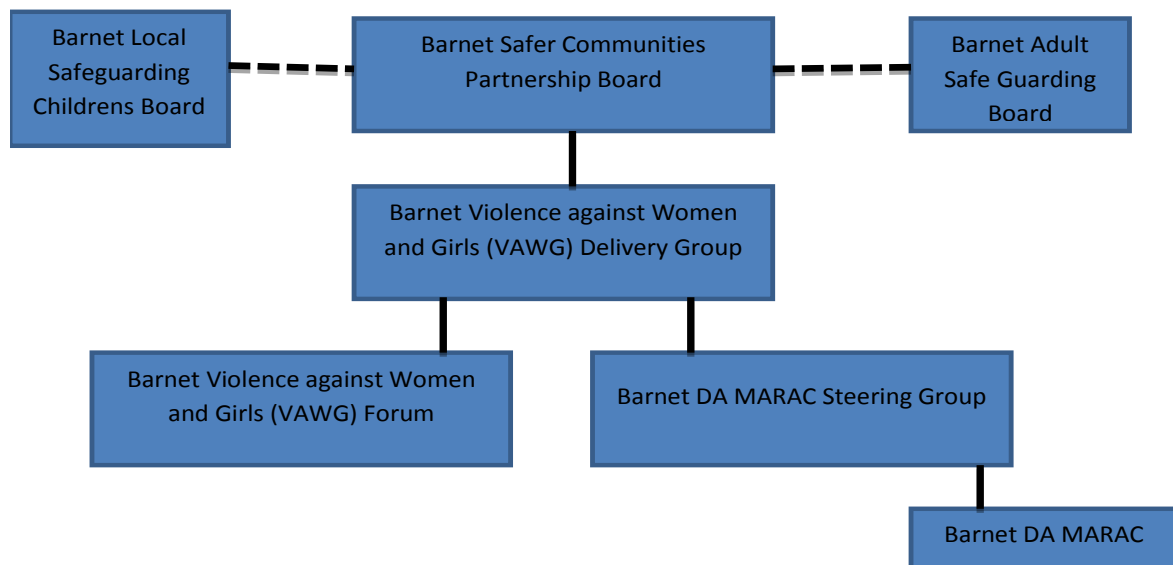
¹¹ Under the Act “domestic homicide review” means a review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person to whom he was related or with whom he was or had been in an intimate personal relationship, or a member of the same household as himself, held with a view to identifying the lessons to be learnt from the death.

¹² <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/community/community-safety/domestic-abuse-and-violence-against-women-and-girls/domestic-homicide>

Governance arrangements for the delivery of the VAWG Strategy

- 2.48 The delivery of the Barnet VAWG strategy is managed by Barnet's VAWG Delivery Group (a sub group of Barnet's Safer Communities Partnership Board). The VAWG Delivery Group meets on a quarterly.
- 2.49 Alongside the VAWG delivery group there is a VAWG Forum which is comprised of agencies from the statutory and voluntary sector that work or have an interest in supporting the delivery of the VAWG strategy in Barnet. The forum seeks to monitor performance of multi-agency delivery of the VAWG action plan, share good practice, identify gaps, recognise emerging needs and issues.
- 2.50 Updates on progress of delivering on the VAWG strategy are provided quarterly to the VAWG Delivery Group and annually to the Safer Communities Partnership Board.

Diagram 1: Barnet VAWG governance chart



Key
_____ Reports to
----- Provides updates to

Report Ends