


Summary

	Community Leadership and Libraries Committee 26 January 2022
Title	Family Services Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) Annual Report
Report of	Chairman of the Community Leadership and Libraries Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	None
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This report provides the Community Leadership and Libraries Committee with an update on the delivery and implementation of the Barnet Violence Against Women and Girls 2017-2020 Strategy and its refresh Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy 2021-24.

The draft Barnet Domestic Abuse (DA) and Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2021-24 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 report provides an overview of Domestic Abuse (DA) & VAWG as it relates to the national, London and local context and the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The report is produced ahead of the availability of annual data, as such reports on delivery across the period Q4 2020/21 - Q3 2021/22 (January – December), although some data extends beyond this period where available, including matters relating to service delivery and continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic

Officers Recommendations	
1.	The Community Leadership and Libraries Committee note and comment on the progress made by the Safer Communities Partnership on delivering the four priority objectives of the Barnet Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (2017 – 2020).
2.	The Community Leadership and Libraries Committee note and comment on Safer Communities Partnership priorities as set out within Barnet’s Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy (2021 – 2024)

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 To provide an update to the annual report of March 2021 to the Community Leadership Committee (CLLC) on the work of the Safer Communities Partnership in meeting the aims of the Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy 2017 – 2020.
- 1.2 The Barnet Safer Communities Partnership ('BSCP' or 'the Partnership') are responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of an overall strategy for reducing crime and anti-social behaviour; this includes Domestic Abuse (DA) and Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG). This report sets out the priorities and aims of BSCP's Domestic Abuse & VAWG Strategy for 2021-2024 and the partnership's commitment to working together to prevent all forms of VAWG.
- 1.3 The draft DA and VAWG Strategy 2021-24 and Action Plan were presented to the Safer Communities Partnership board on the 22 October 2021 where approval was given to formally consult on the draft documents.
- 1.4 The Barnet Corporate Plan 2021-25, under the Healthy priority has an objective for Barnet to be the healthiest borough in London with fantastic facilities for all ages, enabling people to live happy & healthy lives by tackling domestic abuse and gender-based violence.
- 1.5 The Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership Delivery Group (a subgroup to the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board) brings together partner organisations in the borough to work together to respond to DA & VAWG with the aim of preventing it and reducing the harm it causes to victims, their families and the wider community. The Delivery Group agrees the annual VAWG Delivery Plan setting out the key partnership activities required, in order to deliver against the five new partnership priorities within Barnet's DA & VAWG Strategy.

1.6 The five partnership priorities within the draft Barnet DA & VAWG Strategy 2021-24 are:

- Early intervention and prevention of Domestic Abuse and VAWG
- Support all victims and survivors to report, access help and recover
- Pursue perpetrators and engage them in behaviour change interventions to eliminate harm to victims and their families
- Strengthen the partnership response to improve multiagency working and information sharing to deliver improved outcomes
- Working together for safer streets, community and public spaces

2. Background context

- 2.1 In the Annual VAWG Report presented to CLLC in March 2021, it is set out that Barnet's Domestic Abuse and VAWG Strategy 2021 – 2024 would be launched in September 2021. Responsibility for Domestic Abuse & VAWG Service Delivery transferred from Community Safety to Family Services in May 2021. The timeline for the launch of the Domestic Abuse & VAWG Strategy was purposefully delayed allowing it to be shaped by the publication of the government VAWG Strategy in July 2021, by well-informed key stakeholder input following training on the implementation of the new Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and by a series of consultation events which closed on 20 December 2021.
- 2.2 The governments 'Tackling Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy' 2021, has been shaped by a call for evidence from 180,000 respondents. It sets out four strategic aims which are reflected within our local strategic plan; these include prioritising prevention, supporting victims, pursuing perpetrators, and strengthening the system.
- 2.3 Domestic abuse data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales estimates that 2.3 million adults aged 16 to 74 years experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2021. Domestic abuse disproportionately affects women and girls, accounting for 73% of the total victims of domestic abuse-related crimes in 2020/21. Up to one in seven men and one in four women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime, and it is preventable.
- 2.4 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal assent on 29 April 2021, the Act provides a statutory definition of domestic abuse-related crimes which include: any incidence of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 16 years and over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Repeated patterns of abusive behaviour to

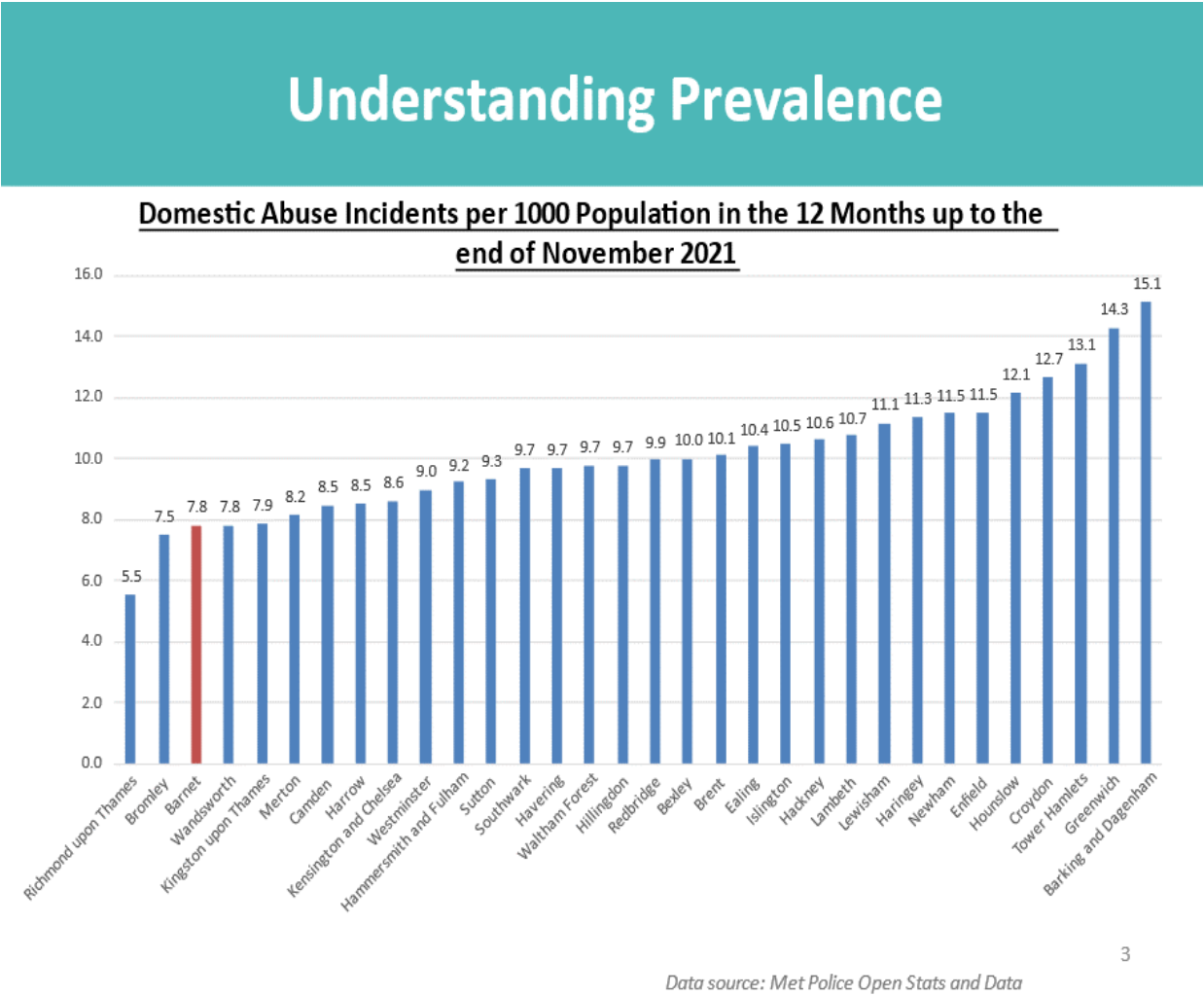
maintain power and control in a relationship even when a relationship has ended are also now a crime.

- 2.5 A Domestic Abuse Commissioner has been established in law to provide accountability to the public and Ministers on failure within statutory service provision and poor practice in services. The Act places a duty on places a duty on local authorities to give support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and safe accommodation and requires local authorities to grant new secure tenancies to social tenants leaving existing secure tenancies for reasons connected with domestic abuse. Children who witness domestic abuse in parental relationships are considered domestic abuse victims.
- 2.6 The Act also provides a statutory basis for the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's law) guidance and creates a domestic abuse protection notice (DAPN) and domestic abuse protection order (DAPO) which are two new civil protection injunctions for immediate and longer-term protection for victims
- 2.7 The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on national and local data; there was a 22% increase in demand against the National Domestic Abuse Helpline during the year 2020/21 with notable increases during periods of national lockdown. There was also a 6% increase in the number of police recorded domestic abuse-related crimes in 2020/21 (n=845,734) with domestic abuse-related crime accounting for 18% (3% increase) of all crimes recorded in the year. (ONS, November 2021).

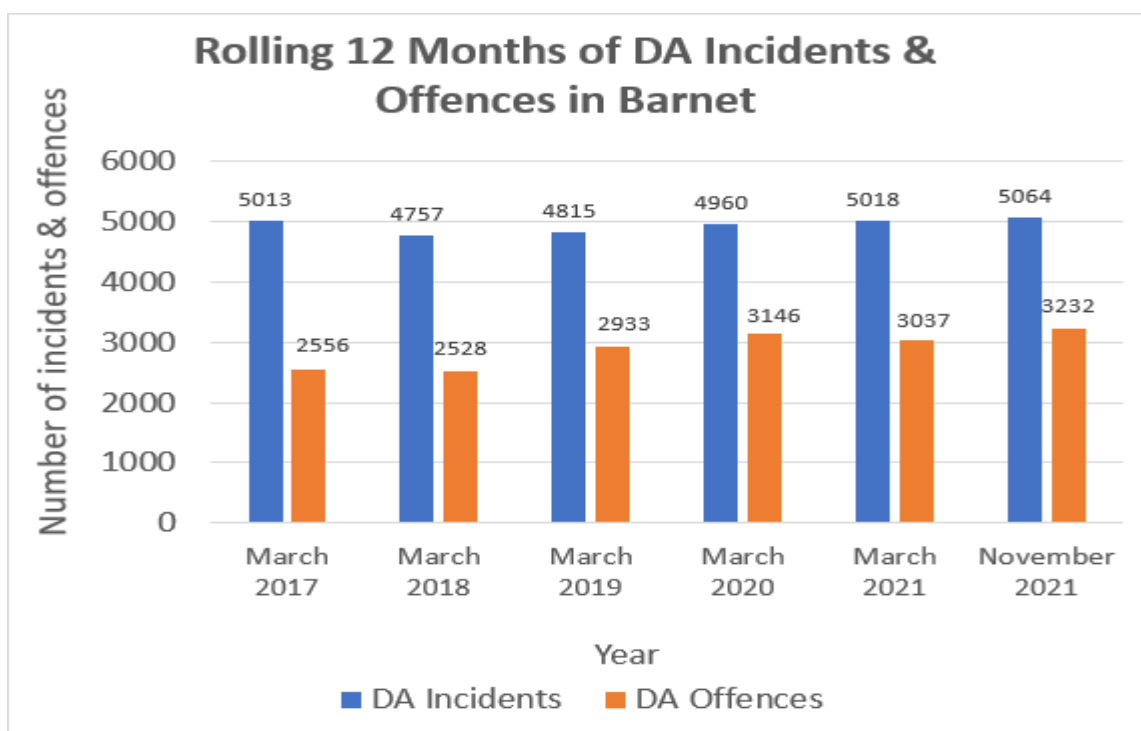
3. Performance

- 3.1 In Barnet, the rate of DA incidents is 7.8 per 1000 population (12 months to November 2021). Barnet has moved down from having the second, to the third lowest rate of DA incidents across London in the last quarter.
- 3.2 There were 757 Domestic Abuse Violence with Injury offences recorded by Police in Barnet in the 12 months up to the end of November 2021; representing a 5.3% decrease when compared to the previous year.
- 3.3 In the 12 months to November 2021, for Violence with Injury Domestic Abuse Offences, 66 suspects were identified and proceeded against by the Police. This equates to a Sanction Detection Rate of 8.7% down from 15.4% on the previous year.

3.4 The changes in data may have been impacted by capacity and confidence to report domestic abuse, particularly over lockdown periods as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic.



3.5 The chart below shows the 5-year trend data for DA incidents and offences in Barnet. The data shows that the volume of DA incidents has continually increased over the COVID-19 pandemic exceeding levels reported in 2017/18. The data also shows an upward trend in the proportion of reported DA incidents being classified as DA offences, with November reporting a 12% increase from 2017/18.



% of incidents that become offences					
51%	53%	61%	63%	60.5%	63%
2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021

- 3.6 The table below highlights the volume of **Domestic Abuse MARAC** referrals received between January 2021 – December 2021. There were **511** referrals of high-risk cases of domestic abuse. There were **223 families** with a total of **446** children referred to MARAC

MARAC (no of service users (12 months to December 2021))	Q4, 2020/21	Q1, 2021/22	Q2, 2021/22	Q3, 2021/22	Jan-Dec 2021 Total
Number of MARAC referrals	142	121	121	127	511
Number of children in referred families	166	77	107	96	446
Number of families with children	72	45	51	55	223
Number of repeat MARAC referrals	26	26	26	27	105
Percentage of repeat MARAC referrals	18%	21%	21%	21%	21%

- 3.7 The percentage of repeat MARAC referrals in 2021 is **21 %** compared to **13.2%** in 2019/20, although Barnet is 10% below the national figure (31%) of repeat referrals to DA MARAC's. The main sources of referrals to the DA MARAC are Met Police, Barnet Solace Advocacy and Support Service (SASS) and Victim Support.
- 3.8 An assessment of the DA MARAC referrals over a 12-month period from January 2021 to December 2021 showed that:
- 35.8% of victims in the cohort had a mental health need (down from 41% on the previous year)
 - 4.7% had an alcohol misuse issue (down from 6%) the previous year and,
 - 5.3% had a drugs misuse issue (up from 5% the previous year)
 - 43 (8.4%) referrals for child to parent violence (compared to 11% a year ago)
 - 55 requests (10.8% of DA MARAC cases) for Clare's Law at the DA MARAC in 2021 compared to 5% in 2019/20

4. Partnership activity highlights 2021

- 4.1 Partnership work delivered under the Barnet VAWG Strategy has included:
- Barnet Council continued to fund specialist services for victims of DA and VAWG; this includes Refuge provision, IDVA Services, Domestic Abuse MARAC and a Perpetrator Programme
 - The Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (DA-MARAC) for high risk domestic abuse victims was brought in-house to the Council from Hestia Charity in April 2021.
 - Transferred management of Domestic Abuse and VAWG services from Community Safety to Family Services delivery, ensuring whole family consideration of the impact of violence and abuse
 - Successfully bid for Home Office/MOPAC one-year funding amounting to £305,832. RISE is delivering a Culturally Integrated Family Approach (CIFA) to Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes to minoritised and/or marginalised communities. The programme is led by LB Barnet in collaboration with Brent and Enfield. The delivery of the programme started on 1st October 2021
 - Extended child to adult/parent Domestic Abuse work to include children who are aged 18+ (adult child to adult parent abuse)

- Rolling out an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) and Young Peoples IDVA (YIDVA) Training to statutory and VCS providers working in front line roles Training a core group of professionals (25-30) in an accredited IDVA/YIDVA course starting in February 2022. The course comprises 12 days (online) training, delivered in four blocks.
- Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) development of a new role in Children's Services to respond to incidents of sexual harassment and violence.
- Development of an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) role to Children's Services
- Delivered multi-agency Domestic Abuse Act 2021 training via the appointment of a Domestic Abuse consultant to support agencies and professionals understand and implement the changes made within the provisions set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 which gives police, local authorities, and the courts wider powers and greater accountability concerning protection of domestic abuse victims
- Increased social media content using **#AllMenCan** **#WhiteRibbon** **#MakeThePromise** to promote White Ribbon Day (International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women) and throughout the 16 days of activism and enlisted White Ribbon champions and/or ambassadors in the Council to support Barnet Council becoming White Ribbon accredited as part of our commitment to meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010
- Held a webinar on *Engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls* on Human Rights Day in December to mark the end of the 2021 White Ribbon Campaign with speakers from leading organisations working with perpetrators of abuse and violence, including RISE CIC, Respect and the DRIVE programme in addition to Simon Kerss, Associate Lecturer, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge.
- Developed a DA and VAWG strategy 2021-24:
Consultation *Phase 1*:
 - ❖ Developed a draft strategy and action plan in collaboration with key stakeholders – survivors, partners, practitioners, LBB staff, Members
 - ❖ Consulted with 27 survivors – 12 in focus groups, 1 by phone and the rest provided written answers
 - ❖ Involved over 110 practitioners, staff, council Members and partners in the consultation process, including:

- Barnet Partnership board
- LBB Women's Network
- LBB LGBTQ+ Network
- Healthy Workstream
- Health and Wellbeing board
- Council Members focus group
- Practitioner and Partner workshop

❖ Approval for full public consultation given by SCPB on 22nd October 2021

Phase 2:

- 8 weeks online public consultation, focus groups with young people and individual stakeholder meetings
- Engaged with 11 members of the Youth Forum to seek their feedback on the 5 partnership objectives
- Individual meetings with key stakeholders, including voluntary and community groups; public health colleagues; mental health commissioners and community safety
- Online questionnaire gained insightful and in-depth feedback from residents, and people who work in Barnet – 28 respondents, 74% are Barnet residents.

❖ The refreshed strategy will be launched on 8 March 2022.

4.2 COVID-19 and Business Continuity

- ❖ Implemented a fourfold increase in the frequency of the Domestic Abuse MARAC meetings by increasing to weekly from monthly. This has resulted in a faster turnaround between referral of complex DA cases and multi-agency risk review and actions at the MARAC. The MARAC has assessed risk and put in place risk reduction plans for complex/high risk DV cases, there are approx. 10 -12 cases being referred to DA MARAC each week.
- ❖ DA services commissioned by the local authority (including the IDVA service, Refuge services, Perpetrator Programme) have made adjustments to their operating models in order to effectively operate under the COVID-19 Government restrictions. All have accepted referrals and delivered interventions and support services. Details of how to access these services as well as other DA related services delivered by the Council and the VAWG partnership have been published on-line: <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/community/community-safety/help-and-support-domestic-or-sexual-abuse>

5. Delivering the VAWG Strategy in 2021

Priority: Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls

5.1 This priority aims to prevent violence against women and girls by focusing on changing attitudes and behaviour that foster violence against women and girls. Some of the key partnership activities that have been delivered during 2021 are:

- VAWG Training
- Awareness raising campaigns
- Women's refuge provision
- Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) service provision
- Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- Barnet Sanctuary Scheme

VAWG Training

5.2 A landmark Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal assent on 29 April 2021. This legislation steps up the response to domestic abuse at every level, giving victims more support while ensuring perpetrators are brought to justice. A DA Consultant was appointed to raise awareness to practitioners and front-line workers on the new legislation. The following training has been delivered.

Training participation (DA Act 2021)

Course Name	Date	Attended
Domestic Abuse Act 2021 - Barnet Homes Housing Options	19/08/2021	29
Domestic Abuse Act 2021 - Barnet Homes Housing Options	26/08/2021	25
Domestic Abuse Act 2021 - Mental Health Safeguarding Champions	06/09/2021	64
Domestic Abuse Act 2021 - Housing Management - Neighbourhood	13/09/2021	25
Domestic Abuse Act 2021 - Multi-agency	27/09/2021	27
Domestic Abuse Act 2021-Barnet Health providers	18/10/2021	15
Domestic Abuse Act 2021 - Adults & Health Services	03/11/2021	20
Domestic Abuse Act 2021 - Housing Management - Neighbourhood	04/11/2021	25
Domestic Abuse Act 2021 - Multi-agency	11/11/2021	18
Domestic Abuse Act 2021- MARAC Reps and deputies	18/11/2021	27
Domestic Abuse Act 2021-Barnet Health providers	25/11/2021	19
Domestic Abuse Act 2021-Barnet Health Providers	02/12/2021	14
Domestic Abuse Act 2021 - Multi-agency	09/12/2021	23
	Total	331

- 5.3 The 331 attendees at the DA Act training awareness programme included partners from Family Services, Adult Social Care and Barnet Homes as well as other statutory and non-statutory partnership agencies. Further, as the table below sets out, MARAC training has been provided; feedback has been very positive on the content and delivery.

MARAC Training participation (12 months to December 2021)

Training Course		Attendance numbers
MARAC	07/10/2021	12
MARAC	08/07/2021	7
Total		19

- 5.4 Barnet Homes housing options staff have requested further interviewing and investigating skills training as Section 78 DA Act 2021 which came into force 5 July 2021, means that a person who is homeless as a result of DA is in Priority Need for the purposes of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996. Local Authorities are no longer permitted to carry out an evaluative assessment of whether or not a person has become vulnerable as a consequence of their experiences and instead will be required to conduct a factual assessment as to whether or not the person has in fact experienced DA, and if they are homeless as a result
- 5.5 MOPAC have commissioned Victim Support to provide an uplift in IDVAs across London, the *'Integrated Victims and Witnesses Service'*. MOPAC has allocated a Senior Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) at Barnet Hospital and a part time Victim Support IDVA at Colindale Police Station to align the provision with the Police Basic Command Units.

Awareness raising campaigns

- 5.6 The VAWG partnership 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.
- 5.7 On the occasion of International Women's Day 2021, a panel discussion was organised on 18 March 2021, "BAMER women experiencing gender based violence" where representatives from Southall Black sisters, IKWRO, Asian Women Resource Centre, Barnet New Citizen gateway (formerly Barnet refugee Service), Solace Women's Aid, London Black Women project and Galop discussed the issues of women with no recourse to public funds and their challenges especially during COVID-19 pandemic, the impact on Middle Eastern and Afghan women, migrant and refugee women in Barnet, the experiences of sexual harassment on women from racially minoritised backgrounds including, migrant women and experiences of trans women,

lesbian and bi women experiencing domestic abuse in the UK; c.125 participants attended the panel discussion

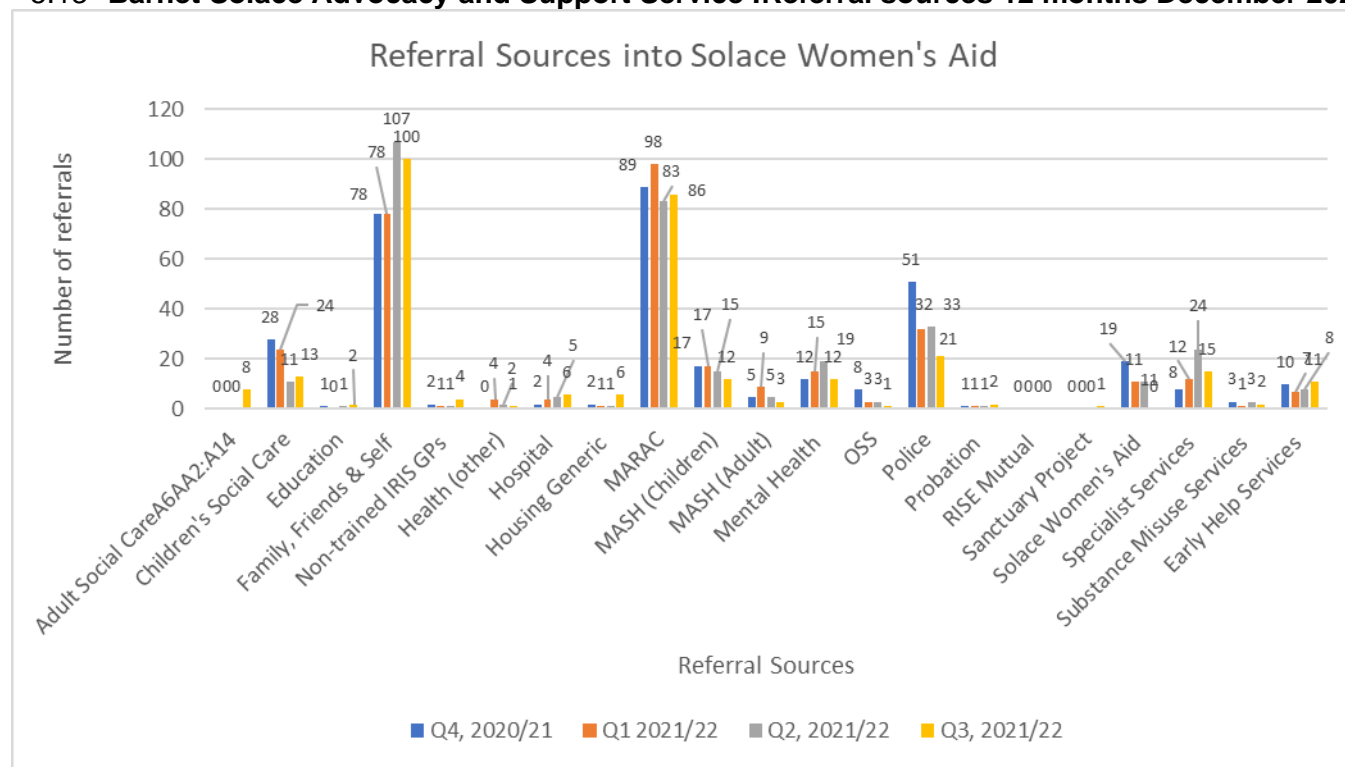
- 5.8 From 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women to 10 December, Human Rights Day there are 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. It is a campaign to galvanise action to end violence against women and girls. In the context of White Ribbon Day 2021 and 16 days of activism, the VAWG partnership organised a Webinar on 'Engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls' on 10 December 2021. Speakers included representatives from Rise Mutual, Drive project and a visiting Research Fellow with PIER (Policing Institute for the Eastern Region). They outlined the local picture in respect of work with perpetrators, the Drive approach to perpetrators and explored the indicators, impacts and responses to adult family violence as a type of domestic abuse; c. 98 participants attended the webinar.
- 5.9 Barnet council is committed to becoming White Ribbon accredited and awareness has been raised with a call to action for attendees at events and Barnet staff to show their support by signing up as a White Ribbon ambassador or champion. Barnet Council engaged in daily social media awareness raising using the #WhiteRibbon and #AllMenCan and several male officers within the council have signed up to support accreditation.
- 5.10 Following the tragic murders of Bibaa Henry and Nicole Smallman in 2020 and Sarah Everard in 2021, the London Borough of Barnet Family Services team produced a special edition of the Barnet First magazine 'VAWG: Help women stay safe' that was delivered in March 2021 to every household in the borough to raise awareness and signpost women to support and services.
- 5.11 The Government has taken action to make Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools, Relationships and Sex Education mandatory in all secondary schools, and Health education compulsory in all state funded schools.

Priority: Improving outcomes for victims & their children

5.12 Between January 2021 to December 2021 **Solace Women's Aid** received **1313** referrals to Barnet's IDVA service, up from **1169 (12.3% increase)** in the previous year;

	Q4 2020/21	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	Q3 2021/22	Year 2021(Jan-Dec)
Number of Solace referrals	336	318	333	326	1313
New Service users	243	121	117	126	607
DASH Risk assessment & safety advice given	236	115	114	126	591
High risk cases receiving IDVA service	45	22	25	23	115
Number of service users leaving the service	138	140	135	112	525

5.13 **Barnet Solace Advocacy and Support Service :Referral sources 12 months December 2021**



5.14 The top five sources of referrals into the Advocacy service during this period (by volume) were:

- the Domestic Abuse MARAC (30%)
- Self-referrals, Family and Friends (13%),
- Solace Helpline and internal referrals (13%)
- Children Social Care (12%)
- and the Police (10%),

5.15 The profile of **Barnet Solace DA Support Service** service-users is set out in Table 4 below:

Table 4.

Organisation	Female	Age range	Other factors
Solace Advocacy and Support Service	98% female victims 2% male victims	38.5% of service users between 31-40 24% between 41-50 15% service users between 26-30	52.5% of SUs with mental health disability 4.5% SUs with problematic drug use 4.7% SUs with problematic alcohol use 14.7% SUs with physical health

Women's refuge provision

5.16 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 was successful in securing £100,000 of funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (formerly MHCLG) to support the continuation the Minerva House provision in 2020/21.

5.17 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. **104** women and children were supported in the Barnet refuges service

Refuge provision in Barnet for January to December 2021

Refuge	Bed space	Support provided in 2021(Jan-Dec)
Minerva House	6 bed spaces	Supported 16 women residents and 14 children fleeing domestic abuse
Hannah House and Arlene House	18 bed spaces	Supported 41 women residents and 33 children fleeing domestic abuse

- 5.18 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, Solace Women's Aid, Asian Women's Resource Centre, private solicitor firms, Barnet Magistrate and Cyber Care) has provided advice and support to **338** victims of Domestic Abuse in the 12 months to December 2021
- 5.19 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, **86** homes received extra security measures under the Barnet Homes Sanctuary scheme to make the victims homes safer.
- 5.20 From January to December 2021, the number of homelessness approaches to Barnet Homes due to domestic abuse is 284 while the number victims in Temporary Accommodation (TA) due to DA is 83. The possible explanation for the number variation is that some victims may have fled to refuge accommodation or be renting in the private sector.

Priority: Holding perpetrators to account

- 5.21 This priority aims to hold perpetrators to account through enforcement and placing the onus on perpetrators to change their behaviour. Key partnership activities that have been delivered during 2021 are:
- Perpetrator programme for Behaviour change
 - Young Person Perpetrators programme

Perpetrator programme for Behaviour change

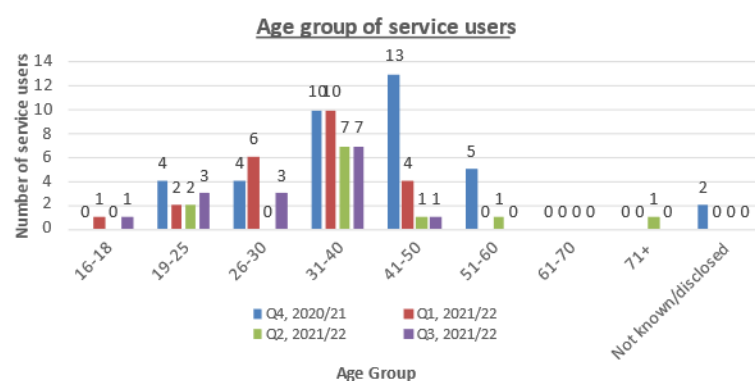
- 5.22 Barnet Council commissions Rise Mutual to deliver a domestic abuse perpetrator programme aimed at reducing re-offending and repeat victimisation. The programme uses proven evidence-based models for behaviour change. The service helps perpetrators to take positive and tangible steps to prevent re-offending. Between January and December 2021, **108** adult perpetrators received interventions under the Perpetrator Behaviour Change programs.

RISE Mutual Perpetrator Programme

Adults Service: Q4 2020/21– Q1-Q3 2021/2022 (Jan December 2021)

Adults Service	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
New referrals	39	23	12	15
Number of engaged service users in the programme at the start of the Quarter	17	34	30	27
New service users entering the programme	10	7	7	8
Number of service users leaving the service	20	18	14	10
Number of service users departing in an agreed and planned way	16	9	2	8

- All **15** new referrals came from **Social Care**
- **13** male, **2** female.

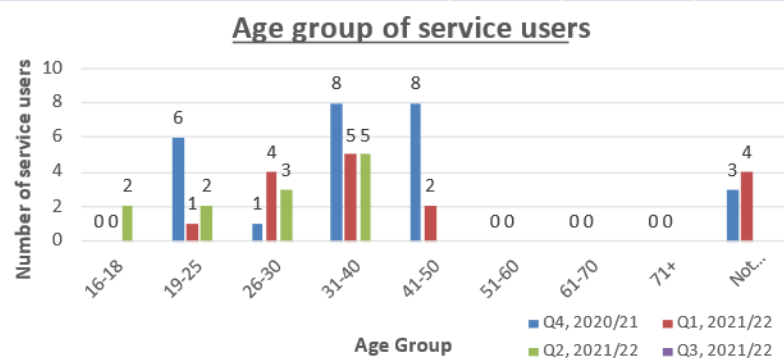


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RISE Mutual Perpetrator Programme

Partner Service: Q4 2020/21– Q1-Q3 2021/2022 (Jan December 2021)

Partner Service	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
New referrals	25	16	10	9
Number of engaged service users in the programme at the start of the quarter	35	32	23	37
New service users entering the programme	10	9	4	13
Number of service users leaving the service	13	11	2	2
Number of service users departing in an agreed and planned way	13	11	2	2



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- 5.23 In 2021, RISE Mutual received a total of **186** new referrals. Of these, 89 were for the adult male and female perpetrator interventions, 60 were for the partner service for the victims and 37 for the young person service
- 5.24 Family Services: Children's Social Care and Early Help Services make the largest volume of referrals. The service is being promoted via MARAC and other professional services
- 5.25 RISE Mutual is a support service and therefore relies on service users consenting to engage and attend appointments and sessions; given it is a voluntary attendance service, engagement rates are very positive.
- 5.26 New CIFA (Culturally Integrated Family Approach) to domestic abuse perpetrator programme launched in September 2021. In August 2021, the London Borough of Barnet led a tri-borough bid with Brent and Enfield boroughs, along with RISE as the provider, and was successfully awarded Home Office perpetrator funding, overseen by MOPAC to work with 65 families/residents. The project applies an intersectional approach, which takes into account the inter-familial conflicts that feed into the victim's abuse and distress and the perpetrator's sense of power. The intervention includes optional family sessions to incorporate a wider cultural approach - working with multi-oppressors. The CIFA practitioners will work predominantly with the main perpetrator but also other family or friends/members of the community facilitating abuse.
- 5.27 RISE seeks feedback from pre/post questionnaires and there are useful case studies returned on the impact of the programme which demonstrate positive impact.
- 5.28 Young Person Perpetrators programme

RISE Mutual Perpetrator Programme
*Young People Service :Q4 2020/21 – Q1-Q3
 2021/2022 (Jan -December 2021)*

Young People Service	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
New referrals	8	7	10	12
Number of engaged service users in the programme at the start of the Quarter	20	15	15	16
New service users entering the programme	8	5	4	3
Total service users leaving the service	2	2	0	3
Total service users departing in an agreed and planned way	1	0	0	3

- 5.29 Rise Mutual delivers a Young Person Perpetrator programme in Barnet for 11-18 year olds. This programme provides one-to-one and group interventions for young people who are engaged in violence towards a parent(s).
- 5.30 The Respect and Principles (RAP) Programme is for 13 to 18-year-old males who have been involved in adolescent intimate relationship abuse.

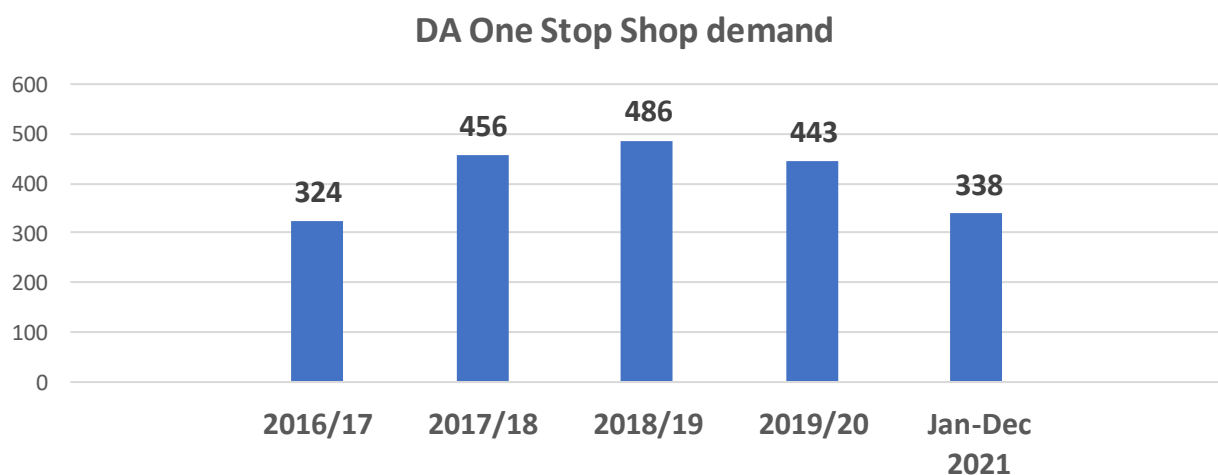
Priority: Enhancing joint working practices between agencies

- 5.31 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. Some of the key partnership activities that have been delivered during 2019/20 are:
- 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

- 5.32 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, Solace Women's Aid, private solicitor firms, Barnet Magistrate, Asian Women Resource Centre and Cyber Care) has provided advice and support to **338** victims of Domestic Abuse in the 12 months to December 2021; this does not include Q4 2021/22. The demand has been constant from **443** in 2019/20, **486** in 2018/19, **456** in 2017/18 and **324** in 2016/17.

5.33 One Stop Shop demand January to December 2021



5.34 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 as well as self-referrals.

Delivery of the IRIS¹ project- Overview of January-December 2021

5.35 The IRIS project started in February 2018; 39 GP Surgeries have received training as part of the programme.

IRIS referrals	Q4, 2020/21	Q1, 2021/22	Q2, 2021/22	Q3, 2021/22	Jan-Dec 2021 Total
Number referrals from GP surgeries	25	45	30	33	133

- The total number of fully trained GP surgeries is 25
- The total number of partially trained GP surgeries is 14

5.36 Feedback about the impact of the IRIS project, from the GP practices has been positive and this has been reflected in a marked increase in the rate of Domestic Abuse referrals from those surgeries. Of the GP surgeries to have received training the number of Domestic Abuse referrals has increased from **4** per year prior to the IRIS training to **133** referrals in the year 2021.

¹ 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.

Operation Encompass in Barnet

- 5.37 Domestic abuse is a safeguarding children issue; statistics show that in 90% of cases children are present in a household during a domestic abuse incident. Domestic Abuse causes anxiety and emotional harm to children, leaving them traumatised, this can affect their education and peer relationships and is also a primary causal factor in young people who go on to engage in violence in the community.
- 5.38 Operation Encompass is a partnership between the Metropolitan Police (MPS), the local authority (LA) and designated safeguarding leads (DSL) in schools. This protocol sets out a joint-agency procedure to provide, by next day notification, appropriate support for children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse in their household.
- 5.39 This protocol does not replace or supersede existing protocols, or singularly address child welfare, it is used in conjunction with the current safeguarding procedures and practitioners' guidelines. It is designed to reinforce safeguarding and ensure children's wellbeing through the provision of support after a domestic incident. Schools will receive information when:
1. Police have been called out to a domestic incident
 2. AND the child is present at the time of the incident
 3. AND the child is Under 18
- 5.40 The knowledge, given to schools/educational establishments through Operation Encompass allows the provision of next day notification to provide immediate silent observation and awareness. Any further needs identified will be processed via the school's standard pastoral care process.
- 5.41 Barnet schools have been signing up to Operation Encompass Since February 2021 to September 2021; there are **59 schools** signed up with ongoing work to encourage all schools to do so. Operation Encompass benefits have been presented to Designated Safeguarding Leads by the Police.

Domestic Homicide Review

- 5.42 Sadly, death as a result of domestic abuse is an all too frequent and tragic reality. When this happens, the law says that professionals involved in the case must conduct a multi-agency Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) to identify what changes can be made to reduce the risk of similar incidents happening in the future. The purpose of Domestic Homicide Reviews is not to assign blame or responsibility but to understand what lessons there are to be learned and make

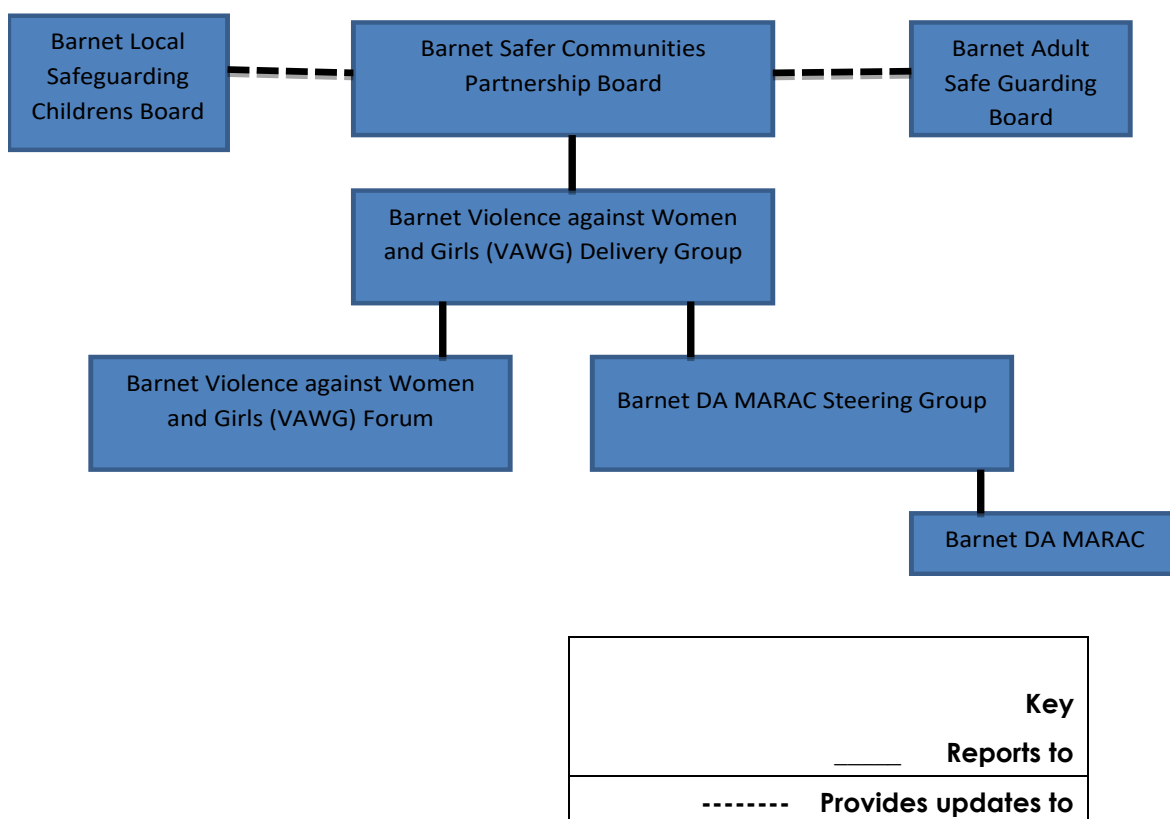
recommendations based on those lessons as to how we can better work together to prevent future homicides.

- 5.43 A Statutory Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) was conducted by Barnet Safer Communities Partnership (BSCP) for the case of 'Zoltan' (pseudonym and a male victim), who was, in April 2018, killed by his partner. The BSCP agreed and approved the content and signed off the Overview Report, Executive Summary, and Action Plan on 22 October 2021. The full Overview DHR report draws overall conclusions and recommendations from the information provided to the DHR panel by the participating agencies, including any IMRs (Individual Management Review) that were conducted. Based on these conclusions and the lessons learned, the report makes 10 recommendations for action arising from this review and from Panel discussions and these are followed by 36 recommendations from participating agency's Individual Management Reviews. Once signed off by the Home Office training and webinars on the learning lessons will be organised.

Governance arrangements for the delivery of the VAWG Strategy

- 5.44 The delivery of the Barnet VAWG strategy is overseen by Barnet's VAWG Delivery Group (a subgroup of Barnet's Safer Communities Partnership Board). The VAWG Delivery Group meets on a quarterly basis.
- 5.45 The VAWG Forum 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; the group report into the VAWG Delivery Group
- 5.46 Updates on progress against 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



6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To update the Community Leadership and Library Committee (CLLC) regarding the progress made in relation to the delivery of the Barnet Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

7.1 Not relevant in relation to this report.

8. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

8.1 Not relevant in relation to this report.

9. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

- 9.1 The report supports the council's corporate priorities as expressed through the Corporate Plan for 2021-25 which sets out our vision and strategy for the next 5 years. This includes the outcomes for the borough, the priorities to focus limited resources on, and the approach for delivery
- 9.2 Our 4 priorities for the borough focus on:
- Clean, safe and well run: A place where our streets are clean and anti-social behaviour is dealt with, so residents feel safe. Providing good quality, customer friendly services in all that we do.
 - Family Friendly: Creating a Family Friendly Barnet, enabling opportunities for our children and young people to achieve their best
 - Healthy: A place with fantastic facilities for all ages, enabling people to live happy and healthy lives.
 - Thriving: A place fit for the future, where all residents, businesses and visitors benefit from improved sustainable infrastructure & opportunity
- 9.3 Under the Healthy priority, the aim to tackle domestic abuse and gender-based violence through investment in intervening earlier to ensure people are prevented from becoming victims of domestic abuse and are protected when it does occur.
- 9.4 Barnet will work with partners to create improved access to mental health support for anyone impacted by domestic abuse by developing outreach to older people, LGBTQ+ residents and refugee communities and ensure that partnership communications are inclusive. We will raise awareness and provide training for frontline staff
- 9.5 The effective implementation of the Domestic abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2021-24 supports Barnet in achieving the outcomes and priorities set out in the corporate plan by helping to keep residents of Barnet safe and protecting the most vulnerable.

10. Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

10.1 The council has an annual budget of £696,400 to commission services. These have been procured in line with the Councils procurement procedures, and a contract performance monitoring regime is in place to ensure the services deliver and demonstrate value for money. The cost for the delivery of the above services will remain within the existing budget allocations.

- The Advocacy services
- Refuge Services
- Perpetrator programme Services

DA MARAC has been brought in-house

10.2 Where suitable opportunities exist, we work local partners, including health, police, education, housing, and the wider third sector to secure additional external sources of funding to fund initiatives to support the delivery of the VAWG strategy in response to our local needs assessment and the best available evidence of what works. Given the above, there are no significant resource implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

11. Legal and Constitutional References

- 11.1 Under s.17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, it is a duty of the Council (and other partner agencies, including Police, Fire & Rescue, Greater London Authority, Transport for London) 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.
- 11.2 The BSCP is a Community Safety Partnership set up in accordance with the requirement of the section 5 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended by section 108 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009.
- 11.3 The Terms of Reference of CLLC in Barnet's Constitution states that the Committee acts 'as the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the Police and Justice Act 2006 (Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny Regulations) 2009'.
- 11.4 The DA Act 2021 which received Royal assent in April 2021 creates for the first time a statutory definition of domestic abuse, establishes in law the office of Domestic Abuse Commissioner and set out the Commissioner's functions and powers, places a duty on local authorities in England to provide, among others, accommodation based support to victims of domestic abuse and their

children in refuges and other safe accommodation, clarifies the circumstances in which a court may make a barring order under section 91(14) of the Children Act 1989 to prevent family proceedings that can further traumatise victims.

12. Insight

N/A

13. Social Value

- 13.1 None applicable to this report, however the council must take into account the requirements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 to try to maximise the social and local economic value it derives from its procurement spend.

14. Risk Management

- 14.1 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.

15. Equalities and Diversity

- 15.1 Decision makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the public-sector equality duty to which the authority must have due regard.
- 15.2 . Elected Members are to satisfy themselves that equality considerations are integrated into day-to-day business and that all proposals emerging from the business planning process have taken into consideration the impact, if any, on any protected group and what mitigating factors can be put in place. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome.
- 15.3 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

15.4 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- Tackle prejudice, and
- Promote understanding.

15.5 Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act. The relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race,
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil partnership

15.6 It is set out in the council's Equalities Policy together with the strategic Equalities Objective of the Corporate Plan - that citizen's will be treated equally with understanding and respect; have equal opportunities and receive quality services provided to best value principles.

16. Corporate Parenting

16.1 Many children who are cared for by the local authority have been exposed to domestic abuse prior to entry into care and young women in care and leaving care may have adverse childhood experiences that may make them more vulnerable to domestic abuse, coercion and control in relationships. The DA and VAWG Strategy 2021 – 2024 aims to ensure that domestic abuse services are accessible to all that need them, including children. The strategy will overlap with Corporate Parenting Services and arrangements for transitional safeguarding.

17. Consultation and Engagement

17.1 As a matter of public law, the duty to consult with regards to proposals to vary, reduce or withdraw services will arise in four circumstances:

- where there is a statutory requirement in the relevant legislative framework
- where the practice has been to consult, or, where a policy document states the council will consult, then the council must comply with its own practice or policy
- exceptionally, where the matter is so important that there is a legitimate expectation of consultation
- Where consultation is required to complete an equalities impact assessment.

17.2 Regardless of whether the council has a duty to consult, if it chooses to consult, such consultation must be carried out fairly. In general, a consultation can only be considered as proper consultation if:

- comments are genuinely invited at the formative stage
- the consultation documents include sufficient reasons for the proposal to allow those being consulted to be properly informed and to give an informed response
- there is adequate time given to the consultees to consider the proposals
- there is a mechanism for feeding back the comments and those comments are considered by the decision-maker / decision-making body when making a final decision
- the degree of specificity with which, in fairness, the public authority should conduct its consultation exercise may be influenced by the identity of those whom it is consulting
- where relevant and appropriate, the consultation is clear on the reasons why and extent to which alternatives and discarded options have been discarded. The more intrusive the decision, the more likely it is to attract a higher level of procedural fairness.

17.3 The refresh of the Domestic Abuse and VAWG strategy 2021-24 has been informed by consultations - including with partnership organisations through the VAWG delivery Board and VAWG Forum. In addition, an extensive consultation exercise has been undertaken with service users.

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Community Leadership and Libraries Committee 11 June 2019

[6826769 - VAWG Annual Report CLLC 11jun19 .pdf \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

Community Leadership and Libraries Committee 11th June 2019

[Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy consultation | Engage Barnet](#)
October 2021