



## London Borough of Enfield

<b>Report Title</b>	<i>Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Abuse</i>
<b>Report to</b>	<i>Crime Scrutiny</i>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<i>12.09.2023</i>
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	<i>Cllr Gina Needs</i>
<b>Executive Director / Director</b>	<i>Tony Theodoulou, Anne Stoker</i>
<b>Report Author</b>	<i>Julie.Tailor@Enfield.gov.uk</i>
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	
<b>Classification</b>	<i>Part 1 Public</i>
<b>Reason for exemption</b>	<i>N/A</i>

### Purpose of Report

**1. To provide an update on the Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy.**

### **2. Main Considerations for the Panel**

- To note the progress of work on prevention and intervention to tackle VAWG and DA.
- To note challenges in measuring success as indicators are not straight forward in this crime type. A reduction in numbers could be at a result of not reporting due to loss in confidence.
- The report presents a list of activity which has taken place over the last year through which we aim to bring about improvements, building confidence and encouraging victims to come forward.

### **3. Background and Options**

**3.1** The United Nations defines Violence against Women and Girls; “as any act of gender-based violence that results or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of

such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, that is directed at a woman because she is a woman or acts of violence which are suffered disproportionately by women.” We also understand that men and boys also suffer from abuse, but VAWG disproportionately affects women and girls.

- 3.2** VAWG and DA continues to impact lives of many and is heightened by high profile cases and tragic events such as the deaths of Nicole Smallman and Bibaa Henry in June 2020, Sabina Nessa Sept 2021, Sarah Everard in March 2021 and Zara Aleena June 2022 and many who have not made the public eye.
- 3.3** These crimes are deeply harmful, not only because of the outcomes for the victims but effects it has on survivors, their loved one and also importantly how it effects society, causing fear and impacting on the freedom and equality everyone should enjoy.
- 3.4** We are reliant on reported data however numbers reported are not always a reflection of the current situation as victims are not always confident in coming forward or confident in the police outcome profound by high profile cases.
- 3.5** The current data tells us:

#### Domestic Abuse Incidents

In the 12-month period ending June 2023 there were 4,121 Domestic Abuse Incidents in Enfield, compared to 3,981 the previous year, an 3.5% increase. Sanction Detections for Domestic Abuse Incidents in Enfield for the 12-month period ending June 2023 is 8.8%. The previous 12 months reported 11.4% of sanction detections. In London there has been a 0.5% increase when comparing to the previous year.

#### Domestic abuse violence with Injury

In Enfield for the 12-month period to the end of June 2023, there was a 13.6% increase in domestic abuse violence with injury offences when compared to the same period the previous year. Sanction Detections for DAVWI offences is 8.8% for the 12-month period to May 2023. This has decreased from 15.7% in the previous 12-month period up to June 2022. London saw a 3.7% increase across the same period.

#### Sexual Offences

Enfield saw a 2.7% decrease in sexual offences in the 12-month period up to June 2023. Enfield Sanction Detections for sexual offences in Enfield for the 12-month period ending June 2023 is 11.4%. London also saw a 2.9% decrease in this period.

#### Rape Offences

In the 12-month period ending June 2023 there were 320 rape offences in Enfield, compared to 351 the previous year, an 8.8% decrease. Sanction Detections for rape offences in Enfield for the 12-month period ending June 2023 is 7.8%. In London there has been a decrease of 3.3% when comparing to the previous year.

### **3.6 Current Work**

### **3.7 Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (commissioned service)**

- We have continued to fund a high standard Independent domestic violence advocate (IDVA) support and emergency accommodation for Victims of DA. Since the last report we have managed to secure external grant funding fund an additional IDVA and Independent Sexual Violence advocate (ISVA).
- Therefore, In Enfield, we commission Solace women's aid to provide a team of 5 IDVA's, 1 ISVA and a part time floating support worker who work with high-risk victims of DA and Sexual Violence.
- Additionally, MOPAC provide a further 2 IDVA's who will work with the police and support men and women fleeing DA.
- Between January 2022 – December 2022 over 900 referrals, including self-referrals were received by our commissioned IDVA service.
- We currently fund a 21-bed refuge in the borough to provide support to survivors of DA.

### **3.8 Locks and Bolts**

- We have continued to provide a Locks and Bolts scheme which is available to individuals that have been a victim of crime.
- The service works with vulnerable clients & their families to enable people to feel safe in their own homes. The service contributes to empowering victims of crime and build confidence through enhanced security.
- Between April 2022 – March 2023 the scheme has supported 71 Enfield residents.
- External funding has been sought to further enhance this scheme so that more Enfield residents can be supported through this scheme.

### **3.9 Annual Campaign**

- We continue to develop and implement more targeted awareness campaigns and methods to effectively challenge attitudes to violence against women annually.
- Implementing public awareness campaigns aim to educate the public about the prevalence of domestic abuse, raise awareness of support available and promote change.
- This year in May 2023 we launched a new campaign in partnership with Met Police and local organisations to raise awareness of support available

for people affected by domestic abuse. This is to reflect on the rising number of domestic abuse incidents and the support available.

### **3.10 CAPVA**

- In April 2022 the VRU published a ground-breaking comprehensive needs assessment into the issues of Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA) in London.
- Research highlighted consistent concern has been the prevalence and dynamics of violence and abuse by children towards parents and carers and the difficulties in measuring CAPVA due to underreporting because of the persistent shame, stigma and fear of criminalisation attached to this form of domestic abuse.
- This was observed through local domestic homicide reviews. Therefore, we applied for some funding to address this need.
- We were successful jointly with Haringey in securing funding to work in partnership with the Police BCU, RISE (CAPVA intervention provider and supporting CAPVA workforce development) and other local key stakeholders.

### **3.11 White Ribbon**

- Enfield Council was the first London council to receive the title of White Ribbon Authority which raises awareness of male violence against women and girls back in 2010. Enfield Council continues to still be a white ribbon borough.
- Every year Community Safety run an event to mark the day and to raise awareness around male violence against women and girls. This year, Enfield Council will mark 20th event.
- Through these events we will ensure that all agencies are equipped with the tools and knowledge to pass onto other members of their team in helping us raise awareness and continue partnership working to tackle VAWG and DA.

### **3.12 Training**

- Training is a key element in raising awareness and increasing confidence in front line staff to challenge perpetrators and recognises signs of abuse.
- Since April 2023 we have run 2 training sessions in raising awareness and intend on running a further 2 by December 2023. This is to ensure our staff and partner agencies have opportunities in upskilling their knowledge and keeping up to date with any legislation changes to support the most vulnerable.

### **3.13 Perpetrator Program**

- Enfield Council has worked with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime to secure £1.46m in funding to expand a two-year programme to tackle violence against women and girls living in the borough to more boroughs across the capital.
- This comes following the success of the council's pioneering pilot scheme, and nine boroughs will now access this funding and begin rolling out their own programmes.
- This will address the borough's needs and aligns with our VAWG strategy aims, aiming to encourage abusers to change their behaviours and reduce reoffending, through perpetrator interventions and prevention.
- Since the May 2023 the launch of the new funding RISE Mutual have already started working with 9 DA perpetrators.
- This is in addition to a mandated program linked with sentences at court and delivered by national probation service.
- Locally this general provision augmented by Family-Based solutions.

**Below is a list of further work being delivered as part of a wider response to keeping people safe.**

### **3.14 Resilience Team**

The DA Act 2021 gives those who are homeless due to DA priority need for accommodation secured by the Local Authority. This aims to ensure victims/survivors are not scared of becoming homeless if they leave the abuser or feel obliged to stay with the abuser. The Resilience team has continued to provide a service in supporting Women and Men effected by DA.

- The Resilience Team consists of 4 specialist domestic abuse coordinators who provide casework to service users who approach the Housing Advisory Service for homeless assistance. The team will assess service users under the statutory framework and if owed a duty, they will ensure that they take reasonable steps so secure safe and suitable accommodation.
- Between April 2022 – March 2023 the Resilience Team has received 687 DA applicants approaching housing.
- DAHA accreditation is the UK benchmark for how housing providers should respond to domestic abuse in the UK. By becoming DAHA accredited, the Council is taking a stand to ensure there are effective and safe responses delivered consistently to domestic abuse. This is currently being led on by Housing to achieve accreditation.

### **3.15 Women's Night-Time Safety Charter**

- The Council have committed to the London Mayors Women's Night-Time Safety Charter.
- The charter requires an organisation to commit to seven elements of work that include for example training staff, designing public spaces and workplaces to make them safer for women at night, encourage reporting by victims and bystanders as part of communications campaign and having a nominated champion to promote women's night safety.
- The Nominated champion is responsible for ensuring that the commitments are met through an action plan and give time and resources to undertake meaningful activities and advocate for practical and cultural changes.

### **3.16 Integrated Care Board (ICB)**

- The ICB commissions the IRIS (Identification and Referral to increase safety) project to improve health's response to Domestic Abuse. The program is designed to equip GPs with the knowledge, skills and resources to effectively identify and respond to patients who may be experiencing domestic abuse.
- IRIS provides training to GPs about the signs of domestic abuse, the various forms it can take, and how to sensitively and safely communicate with patients who may be victims. GPs are trained on how to ask the questions, offer support, and provide appropriate referrals to specialist services that can offer further assistance to those affected by domestic abuse.
- The ICB are working with their IRIS team to provide GPs across Enfield the training and encouraging GP practices to sign up to the program.

### **3.17 Barnet Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust**

- A new Domestic Abuse and Sexual Safety Co-Ordinator (DASSC) has been recruited to develop the Trust's response to Domestic Abuse and Sexual Safety. The DASSC provides support to front line staff and service managers in identifying and responding effectively to domestic abuse and sexual violence. This would look at any presenting risk, support with routine enquiry, safety planning, ensuring that appropriate actions and relevant referrals are offered and made.
- The DASSC has set up a Domestic Abuse and Harmful Practises drop-in surgery operating on a weekly basis. The surgery acts as a Space for practitioners to bring concerns about Domestic abuse risk.

- The DASSC continues to support staff and provides bimonthly training across the trust covering best practice, routine enquiry, identifying domestic abuse, the cycle of abuse, barriers to leaving, lessons learned from domestic homicide reviews, MARAC, IDVA services and the high-risk indicators of harm.

### **3.18 Operation Encompass**

- Operation Encompass is an initiative that helps to safeguard children/young people who may have been exposed to domestic abuse.
- When a child/young person has been present when a domestic abuse incident has occurred, and the police have been called, then the Metropolitan Police will notify the school designated safeguarding lead (DSL) that such an incident has occurred so that support can be provided.
- Operation Encompass recognises that effects of domestic abuse can extend to children's well-being, behavior and performance at school. By sharing information and fostering collaboration between police and schools, the initiative aims to enhance the protection and support available to children impacted by domestic abuse.

### **3.19 Walk and Talk**

- The Council are supporting and promoting the Met Police "Walk and Talk" initiative to create productive discussion about women's concerns of safety in public spaces. The Met Police are inviting women to come along and share their thoughts on women safety. They would like to hear experiences and concerns women may have.
- This initiative has already helped the Met Police to map out VAWG hot spots which has enabled us to use this alongside Met data for the support for the new safer street funding application for 32 cameras.

### **3.20 New Met plan**

- The Met Police have a new Met plan to achieve their mission of More Trust, Less Crime and High Standards. The plan sets out our three priorities for reform: community crime-fighting, culture change and fixing our foundations.
- The Met police are building A New Met for London where communities know their local officers, help to shape their policing priorities, and work with them to reduce crime and anti-social behavior; and when victims call them for help, they're satisfied with their response.
- They want to build on the work they've done and keep serious violence low. They want to solve more rapes, domestic violence, child abuse and other cases of predatory offending, and target the most dangerous offenders to take them off the streets before they can harm again.

- Progress in the last 9 months has seen calls from the public being answered faster and they have charged more than 500 cases of rape and serious sexual offences in the last 12 months compared to the previous year, as they increasingly target the most dangerous men.
- We will work in partnership with the Metropolitan police to provide feedback on the local plan and its implementation.

### **3.21 Conclusion**

- Addressing VAWG and DA is not a single agency issue and any work with perpetrators should not be done in isolation. We have made strong commitment in a co-ordinated approach in tackling VAWG and DA. We continue to work in partnership with agencies to provide a multi-agency approach for early intervention and prevention.
- The elements of work reported here are included to demonstrate that there has been progress in ensuring services are appropriately designed to support all communities given the rate of DA and Sexual violence in the borough.
- Despite all the work we are still facing extreme challenges exacerbated by external factors such as the cost-of-living impact and trust and confidence.
- In Summary, the council and its partners continue to work together to tackle VAWG and DA. Although there is progress of good work locally, we know more needs to be done to sustain the ongoing work.

## **4. Relevance to Council Plans and Strategies**

Reflects the plans including the priorities of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board (SSCB) of “tackling violence in all its forms”. Enfield Council is a responsible authority within the SSCB which acts as the statutorily required Community Safety Partnership for Enfield.

‘Keep people safe from domestic abuse’ is a priority in our Fairer Enfield policy.

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### **Appendices**

**None**

### **Background Papers**

VAWG strategy- [Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy \(enfield.gov.uk\)](https://www.enfield.gov.uk/VAWG-Strategy)