



London Borough of Enfield

Report Title	Development of the Enfield Safer Stronger Communities Board Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2025-30
Report to	Healthy and Safe Communities Scrutiny Panel
Date of Meeting	27th January 2025
Cabinet Member	Cllr Gina Needs
Executive Director / Director	Tony Theodoulou - Executive Director of People Anne Stoker – Director of Children & Family Services
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Ward(s) affected	All
Classification	Part 1 Public
Reason for exemption	N/A

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report sets out the process and timeframe for the development and adoption of the Enfield Safer Stronger Communities Board Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2025-30.

2. Main Considerations for the Panel

2.1. Safer Stronger Communities Board Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2025-30

- 2.2. The Domestic Violence Act 2021 places a requirement on the local authority and partner agencies to support victims of domestic abuse including children.
- 2.3. The development and adoption of a 5-year Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy through the Safer Stronger Communities Board (SSCB) ensures that this requirement, alongside other statutory requirements related to the safety of women and girls, are met.
- 2.4. The Current SSCB Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2023-25 ends in December 2025. This provides the SSCB with the opportunity to ensure that there is strong community and voluntary sector engagement in the future shape and priorities for the next 5 years.

- 2.5. The aim is to develop and adopt a victim centered strategy, ensuring that the voice of both victims and survivors of abuse are heard and represented.
- 2.6. It is recognised that Violence, including Violence against Women and Girls is preventable, not inevitable. To achieve this, it is vital that partner agencies work together under one recognised and adopted approach. Our intention is to use the Public Health Violence Prevention Model based of the below 3 tiers: -
- Primary – Preventing violence before it occurs.
 - Secondary – Respond to the immediate risk of violence.
 - Tertiary – Long term support for those impacted or affected by violence.
- 2.7. The strategy will set out our shared vision and objective for the next 5 years. It will include a series of short-, medium- and long-term priorities based on the above three tiers, across the lifetime of the strategy.
- 2.8. The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) are currently consulting on the Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029. One of the proposed 3 key objectives is to Reduce Violence and Criminal Exploitation. This includes the priority to "*Take a Public Health Approach to reducing Violence Against Women and Girls.*"
- 2.9. The intention is to ensure that the SSCB Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2025-30 aligns with the Mayor's Office future Police and Crime Plan and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy which is also due for consultation in 2025.
- 2.10. One of key approaches to preventing violence against women and girls is to ensure that those involved in any forms of violence, misogyny, or sexual harassment, is challenged. Enfield Council is White Ribbon accredited. White Ribbon is a social movement organization specifically aimed at challenging men in terms of their behaviour and attitudes towards women, recognizing that men are the main perpetrators of abuse.
- 2.11. The Council has a White Ribbon Champion, (the Director of Public Health) and 8 male Ambassadors, at Chief Officer, Director, and Head of Service level. An action plan is being developed to ensure that the council embeds the principles of White Ribbon across the Council, specifically that men are not bystanders when it comes to the harassment or abuse of women and should take the opportunity to challenge such behaviour.
- 2.12. The 2024 Enfield White Ribbon Conference, held in November, heard from a series of regional and national speakers. The conference also included a workshop with professionals on the future shape of the SSCB Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2025-30. The feedback will form part of the future shape and next steps in the development of the strategy.
- 2.13. Current data picture**
- 2.14. The following section provides key headline information on the scale of violence against women and girls. The Strategy will provide more in-depth analysis, including a focus on key areas which emerge through the consultation process.

- The Metropolitan Police Service recorded incidents of crime, highlights that Domestic Abuse accounts for over one third of all Violence Against the Person crimes between December 2023 and November 2024.
- There were 3,540 Domestic Abuse offences in Enfield in 2023/24 (December 2023 – November 2024), compared to 3,978 in the previous year. This is an 11% decrease on the previous 12- month period.
- Enfield is ranked 9th highest for the rate of domestic abuse offences per 1000 population, compared to all London Boroughs.
- For the period January to November 2024 there were 469 cases discussed at Enfield Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference. (MARAC). This is a 16% decrease when compared to the same period in 2023. 28% of cases were repeat offences.
- Data from January -December 24 highlights that Children and Families services received contacts through the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub for concerns of domestic abuse for 571 individual children. In addition, there were 1,208 children, where the Child and Family assessment highlighted domestic abuse concerns. The quarter four period data is provisional and still subject to validation at the point of this report.
- Enfield Council commissions Solace Women's Aid to provide Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (IDVA) for Enfield residents. Between October 2023 and September 2024 Solace has received 768 referrals, decrease by 9% compared to previous 12 months.
- In addition, Children and Families Service has a dedicated domestic abuse team of social workers, ensuring children are safeguarded in those households that experience domestic abuse.
- The age range of 35-44 age was the highest for the number of DA (Domestic Abuse) incidents. The second-highest age range was 25-34.
- 75% of victims were recorded as female.
- 60% of suspects were recorded as male. However, in 22% of cases the gender was not recorded and it is highly likely that this figure is higher.
- The data indicates the most identified suspect relationships to the victim were ex-partner, son, husband, boyfriend, and ex-boyfriend.
- There have been 15 Domestic Related Homicide Reviews in Enfield since 2016, including 2 in the calendar Year 2024. In all but one case the victim was female.

2.15. Next Steps

2.16. The following section sets out the next steps in relation to the development of the SSCB Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2025-30. It also includes an outline of the framework for the strategy. This is subject to change and adaptation through the consultation process.

2.17. Development of the Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2025-30.

2.18. As part of the partnership approach, a Task and Finish Group will be established to oversee the consultation and development of the Strategy.

2.19. The Task and Finish Group will be chaired by the Head of Community Safety and will include representation from partner agencies, including the Police, Health, Probation, Children and Adults Safeguarding, Community and Voluntary organisation with expertise in violence against women and girls.

2.20. The Task and Finish Group will hold a series of workshops between April and June 2025. These workshops will have specific themes based on the findings from the data analysis and consultation feedback.

2.21. A draft strategy will be produced in June 2025 and will be shared across SSCB partners, lead officers and front-line practitioners as well as victims and survivors who have engaged in the process.

2.22. This approach will ensure that those involved in the delivery of the strategy, as well as those affected by violence against women and girls, feel their views are fully recognised and there is ownership across a wide range of partners.

2.23. **Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2025-30 Outline Framework**

2.24. The following section sets out the broad framework for the 2025-30 strategy. The framework provides a structure for the Task and Finish Group and the opportunity to identify specific leads for each key section. The framework is as follows: -

- **Definition of violence against women and girls** - The strategy will use the United Nations definition of 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”*.
- **Definition of Domestic Abuse** – The strategy will also set out the definition of Domestic Abuse provided in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, including recognising children as victims of domestic abuse, in their own right.
- **What the data tells us** - National, Regional and Local picture of violence against women and girls. This will include local trends, victim and perpetrator profiles, details of cases being referred to the Enfield Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), analysis of housing related cases related to domestic abuse, provider agencies information and analysis of all Domestic Related Death Reviews.
- **Consultation feedback** – The Task and Finish Group will undertake a consultation survey on the strategy to ensure that the lead professionals, community, voluntary sector agencies and a community voice is represented within the vision, objectives and priorities for the next 5 years.
- **The voice of victims and Survivors of abuse** – This section will focus on the affect and impact of abuse through the lens of survivors. It will include those being supported through Independent Domestic Violence Advocates and cases managed through the Child Against Parent Violence Advocacy (CAPVA) programme and Adult to Parent Violence Advocacy programme (APVA).
- **Our Approach** – The strategy will set out the importance of adopting a Victim Centred, Public Health Approach, adopting a narrative style in order to highlight the impact of abuse through the lens of those experiencing it, in each of its forms. This will also include a section of breaking the myths on why people perpetrate violence.
- **Vision Objective and Priorities** – A clear vision will be supported by a series of well-defined objectives and the priorities required to deliver the objectives.

- **Key Actions** – The Strategy will set out a short summary of the key actions against the objective and priorities. These will be broken down under the three Public Health tiers to ensure that each element is fully covered. A more detailed action plan will be developed and will be responsibility of the partnership groups, set out in the governance section below.
 - **Governance** – The delivery of the Strategy will be the responsibility of the SSCB Domestic Abuse Strategic Group. The role, remit and attendees of the Group will be reviewed to ensure there is sufficient representation at a senior level across the partnership, including representation from the Safeguarding Enfield Partnership, to deliver the action plan. The group reports to the Safer Stronger Communities Board and will be required to provide an update of the progress against the strategy on a 6 monthly basis. (see Appendix 3)
 - **Where to seek help, support and advice** – The strategy will provide information and links to organisations for those seeking support advice. This will include information for victims, survivors, families affected by domestic related homicides and for perpetrators of abuse. There will also be information for businesses on the Enfield Night-time Safety Charter and how they can join.
- 2.25. The intention is to develop the SSCB Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2025-30 over the next 6 months, with the aim of it being formally adopted by the SSCB in Autumn of 2025.

3. Background and Options

- 3.1. Violence against Women and Girls is a key priority for the Safer Stronger Communities Board. As highlighted above, the data clearly indicates that Domestic Violence consistently, accounts for over a third of all Metropolitan Police Service recorded Violence Against the Person incidents in Enfield.
- 3.2. Domestic Violence is also a key indicator in early childhood trauma, leading to intergenerational challenges in terms of emotional and behaviour development. There is a considerable body of academic research into this area for example the numerous reports produced by the National Society for the Protection of Cruelty of Children (NSPCC). <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse>
- 3.3. One option would be that the SSCB adopts the future MOPAC Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, which is due for consultation in early 2025. However, this approach would not allow for a more in-depth understanding of the challenges for Enfield and provide the relevant services that reflect the specific needs of the local communities within the borough.

Relevance to Council Plans and Strategies

1. Council Plan 2023-26 – Strong, healthy and safe communities and thriving children and young people .
 2. Safer Stronger Communities Board (SSCB) – Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2023-5.
 3. SSCB Violence Against Women and Girls governance structure.
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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Safer Stronger Communities Board Violence against Women and Girls Strategy Governance Structure.

Background Papers Not applicable

Departmental reference number, if relevant: N/A