

Meeting: Safer Communities Executive Board

Date: 15 October 2008

Report Title: 2nd Haringey Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence Strategy

Report of: Sharon Kemp, Assistant Chief Executive, Policy, Performance, Partnership and Communication (PPP&C)

Summary

This report introduces our Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence Strategy covering the period 2008 – 2012, following the successful implementation of the first Haringey Domestic Violence Strategy that ends this year. Domestic and Gender Based Violence is a crime, tackling Domestic and Gender Based Violence is key to building stronger and safer communities.

This second Strategy includes Gender Based Violence because as a public body Haringey Council is required by the Gender Equality Duty, April 2007 to proactively promote equality of opportunity between women and men and eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment. From November 2007 all Local Authorities have been put on notice by the Equality and Human Rights Commission that they will be monitored under the Gender Equality Duty to ensure they are taking action on violence against women. Gender Based Violence includes: domestic violence; rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment and a stalking, trafficking and sexual exploitation and crimes in the name of honour.

Recommendations

- i. To approve the strategic aims of the Domestic Violence and Gender based Violence Strategy
- ii. To approve the actions to be completed to implement this Strategy
- iii. To note the achievements of the 1st Haringey Domestic Violence Strategy

Financial/Legal Comments

Chief Financial Officer Comments:

The Chief Financial Officer has been consulted on the contents of this report & the Strategy and concurs with the financial comments contained in Section

8 of the report that increased joined – up and partnership working should actually lead to a more efficient delivery.

Head of Legal Services Comments:

Section 17 Children Act 1989 places a duty on the Local Authority to promote and safeguard the welfare of children under the age of 18. In respect of young people the Local Authority's duties extends to those who are deemed to be subject to the leaving care provisions up to the age of 24 (if the young person pursues a programme of education or training). It does not appear that this Strategy will conflict with those duties.

For more information contact:

Eve Featherstone, Principal Equalities Officer, Tel. Ext. 2583

Eve.Featherstone@haringey.gov.uk

Deirdre Cregan Domestic Violence Co-ordinator, Tel. Ext. 2581

Deirdre.Cregan@haringey.gov.uk

Background

The aim of the strategy is to reduce Domestic Violence and Gender Violence, by providing high quality support services to those who experience Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence in Haringey. This strategy is also well-placed to enable Haringey Council to meet the 'Safer For All' priority in the Haringey Community Strategy which states, "We will make homes safer and create places that people and children enjoy using and take pride in" (Haringey Community Strategy 2007 – 2016, 'Safer For All' priority).

Domestic Violence is a priority because Haringey Council is strongly committed to making Haringey a safe place for its residents. Domestic Violence represents 30% of violent crime in Haringey and as such requires a commitment from all key agencies to eradicate this crime. Our aim is to create a borough where there is zero tolerance of Domestic Violence; our approach to achieving this is by strong partnership working, creating a society in Haringey where Domestic Violence is unacceptable in any form.

The Haringey Domestic and Gender Based Violence Strategy follows directly on from the first Haringey Domestic Violence Strategy and continues the work started in that approach. In order to put the second strategy in context we have reviewed the achievements and challenges of the first strategy. They include: the expansion of services at Heathstone; setting up an expert DV service users group; setting up murder review panels; working with perpetrators; establishing a sanctuary scheme; agreeing an information sharing protocol; partnership work with health professionals, a raft of initiatives with children and young people.

The new areas covered in this strategy are Gender Based Violence. Gender Based Violence includes: domestic violence; rape and sexual assault, sexual

harassment and a stalking, trafficking and sexual exploitation and crimes in the name of honour. Gender Based Violence is a priority because as a public body Haringey Council is required by the Gender Equality Duty, April 2007 to proactively promote equality of opportunity between women and men and eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment. From November 2007 all local authorities have been put on notice by the Equality and Human Rights Commission that they will be monitored under the Gender Equality Duty to ensure they are taking action on violence against women. Other Areas for development will be; Better use of pooled budgets, Improved Partnership arrangements, Organisations that constantly rotate staff roles on a regular basis need to ensure a continuously and constantly available level of service, improve support for survivors through the legal process. Witness protection, specialist advocates, tougher sentencing and above all a Specialist Domestic Violence Court should increase convictions and reduce victim retraction rates.

The Council has a duty to safeguard children and young people and protect them from harm. Priority 8 of Haringey's Children and Young People's Plan includes the specific aim to: "reduce risk to specific groups, for example, those at risk of sexual exploitation, those with disabilities and those subjected to domestic violence". The Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence Strategy will contribute to meeting this objective by increasing the safety of children and young people who experience Domestic and Gender Based Violence.