

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Violence Against Women & Girls – Draft Scope and Terms of Reference (2021/22)

Rationale	<p>A key outcome of the Council’s Borough Plan 2019-23 is that levels of violence against women and girls will be significantly reduced.</p> <p>The Council’s Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy for 2016-2026 sets out the Council’s vision to make Haringey one of the safest boroughs in London for women and girls in which no form of abuse is tolerated. The strategy sets out four key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing a Coordinated Community Response• Prevention• Support for victims/survivors• Holding perpetrators accountable <p>The Council’s VAWG Strategy states that violence against women and girls includes violence that is targeted at women or girls because of their gender or affects women and girls disproportionately. Examples of VAWG given include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sexual violence, abuse and exploitation• Sexual harassment and bullying• Stalking• Trafficking• Domestic violence and abuse• Coercive and controlling behaviour• Female genital mutilation• Forced marriage• Crimes committed in the name of ‘honour’ (so-called ‘honour’ based violence) <p>The Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel have monitored this issue in recent years. In June 2020, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee was informed that reports of domestic abuse had increased by 30-35% following</p>
------------------	--

	<p>the lockdown measures imposed by the Government in March 2020. In November 2020, the Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel received an overview from the VAWG team of changes made to the delivery of VAWG services since the implementation of lockdown measures. The Panel heard about increased communication about VAWG services and the work that the Council had carried out with partners and service providers to identify and support residents who needed help but was concerned to hear about delays to court proceedings and shortage of refuge spaces. Recent high profile incidents of violence against women and girls have further highlighted the importance of the issue of VAWG.</p> <p>The Overview & Scrutiny Committee’s review will examine the progress of the Council 10-year VAWG strategy, the resources available to support it and consider the scale of the VAWG issue in the borough. The Committee will also seek to understand the scale of underreporting of VAWG incidents and the level of confidence that women and girls in the borough have in reporting incidents of VAWG to the authorities. In addition to domestic abuse, this should also include other prevalent issues such as street harassment and issues that may be specific to certain communities such as FGM and forced marriage.</p> <p>The Panel will seek to consider evidence from a broad range of witnesses and to develop recommendations to Cabinet on possible improvements to VAWG prevention in the borough.</p>
<p>Scrutiny Membership</p>	<p>The Members of the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel that will carry out this review are:</p> <p>Councillors: Khaled Moyeed (Chair), Dana Carlin, Pippa Connor, Makbule Gunes & Matt White.</p> <p>Co-opted members: Yvonne Denny, Lourdes Keever, Jhunjhunwala KanuPriya, & Anita Jakhu.</p>
<p>Terms of reference</p>	<p>The aims of this project are:</p> <p>To review the current arrangements for the prevention of violence against women and girls in Haringey including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s 10-year VAWG strategy, the resources available to support it and the involvement of partner organisations, including those in the voluntary and community sector. • The scale of VAWG in the borough, and the level of confidence of women and girls have in reporting incidents of VAWG to the authorities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s approach to communicating information about available services to women and girls who have experienced or are at risk of violence/abuse. • How the Council is housing those who have been subjected to domestic abuse. • How the Council is making physical spaces in the borough, such as parks, streets and housing estates, safer for women and girls.
Links to the Borough Plan	<p>Priority 2: People. “Our vision is a Haringey where strong families, strong networks and strong communities nurture all residents to live well and achieve their potential”</p> <p>Outcome 8 (d) Levels of violence against women and girls will be significantly reduced; and, Outcome 5 (c) Children and young people will be physically and mentally healthy and well.</p>
Evidence Sources/Witnesses	<p>A broad selection of interested parties will be invited to take part in the review and to submit evidence, including voluntary and community groups, Police, Schools and Council officers. The Committee will also consider how best to engage with providers of VAWG services and voluntary/community groups, including possible site visits and a roundtable discussion.</p>
Equalities Implications	<p>The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to: (1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act; (2) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not; (3) Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.</p> <p>The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy/maternity; race; religion/faith; sex and sexual orientation. In addition, marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.</p> <p>The Panel should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them during final scoping, evidence gathering and final reporting. This should include considering and clearly stating: How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share the nine protected characteristics; Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; Whether there is equality of access to service and fair representation of all groups within Haringey; Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people, are being realised.</p>

Timescale	<p>Draft scoping document submitted to Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 29th November 2021</p> <p>Evidence gathering sessions – November 2021 to December 2021</p> <p>Analyse findings / develop recommendations – January 2021</p> <p>Report published – January 2021</p>
Reporting arrangements	<p>The Director of Adults & Health will coordinate a response to Cabinet to the recommendations of the Committee’s final report.</p>
Constraints/Barriers/Risks	<p>The timescales are particularly constrained as there are local elections scheduled for May 2022. The last Cabinet meeting of the municipal year is scheduled to take place on 8th March 2022 and so the Committee’s recommendations would need to be provided in good time to allow the Cabinet to provide a response.</p>
Officer Support	<p>Lead officer: Dominic O’Brien, Principal Scrutiny Officer, 020 8489 5896, Dominic.Obrien@haringey.gov.uk</p>