

## Executive Summary

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### 1. Introduction

Addressing violence against women and girls (VAWG) forms part of our local partnership approach to improving health, safety and wellbeing in the borough. Tackling VAWG is a priority within the 2015-2018 Corporate Plan's *Clean and Safe* objective.<sup>1</sup> The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is accountable for tackling violence against women and girls with specific, strategic oversight by the Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Group which reports to the CSP. The Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB), Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Safeguarding Adults' Board (SAB) contribute to this agenda and ensure appropriate partner engagement.

Between August and October 2016, a consultation was undertaken across the borough to influence the development of the 10 year Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy which will be published in November 2016.

This report outlines the key learning from the consultation process and:

- Looks at the available data on the prevalence of various forms of violence against women and girls within the borough
- Looks at the experience of female survivors of violence and provides an overview of what we currently know about local needs
- Provides an overview of the national and regional context of work on addressing violence against women and girls
- Highlights proposals made during the consultation on the way forward for addressing and preventing violence against women and girls in Haringey.

The violence against women and girls consultation involved:

- A series of focus groups held with local groups of survivors, women and young people
- Consultation with professionals and partners through our local VAWG professional networks
- Consultation with professionals through other professional networks and events
- An on-line and paper consultation
- Individual interviews with key stakeholders

We received 55 responses to the online and paper consultation; 53 took part in the focus groups and over we consulted with over 200 in our professional and local networks. We were able to capture demographic information for the majority of the respondents to the online and paper consultation and 29 of the respondents to the focus groups (10 were young people and 19 were women participating in the survivor focus groups. 5 professionals also took part in 2 additional focus groups where their demographic information was not captured.)

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<sup>1</sup> For more information see; Priority 3: Clean and Safe - A clean, well maintained and safe borough where people are proud to live and work, Haringey's '*Building a Stronger Haringey Together*' Corporate Plan 2015-2018, available at:

[http://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/corporate\\_plan\\_2015-18.pdf](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/corporate_plan_2015-18.pdf) (last accessed 30.09.16)

Over the three different groups there were a wide range of ages – 90% of the young people who participated were under 18; 53% of the respondents to the online and paper questionnaire were aged between 26 and 45 and the median age for the survivor consultation was 34-39.

Across all groups, the majority of respondents identified as heterosexual – 95% in the survivor group, 100% in the young people group and 78% in the professional and local resident consultation. With the exception of the survivor consultation where 100% of participants were female, the gender split was almost 50% between female and male respondents.

Ethnicity for all 3 groups was also mixed although the professional and local resident group was the least mixed with 50% identifying as White British and 24% identifying as 'Any other Background' without specifying. 47% of those for whom we have the demographic information in the survivor consultation identified as White Other.

Disability figures were highest in the survivor consultation with almost a third identifying as having a disability. 12.7% in the professional and local residents' consultation had a disability and none of the young people identified as having a disability.

## **2. Highlights from the consultation process**

The consultation process showed that there is broad support for our proposed approach to addressing violence against women and girls in Haringey. The 10 week process allowed us to access a wide range of views on all of the areas and holding dedicated focus groups with survivors, professionals, local residents and young people meant that more detailed and nuanced insight could be obtained as well as allowing us to identify barriers to access and gaps within current services.

The key element identified by all respondents was the crucial need for agencies across voluntary, community and statutory sectors to work closely with local residents and with survivors of abuse to design an approach that works across Haringey that develops a coordinated community response.

## **3. The Strategic Priorities**

### **3.1 Coordinated Community Response**

The respondents to the consultation were fully supportive of developing a coordinated community response as an effective method to address and prevent violence against women and girls. There were concerns about the assumption of 'benign' communities, on the basis that many areas of VAWG are perpetrated with community collusion. The current diagram also assumes a hetero-normative family with children as the starting point and needs to be redesigned accordingly to reflect the different profile of VAWG.

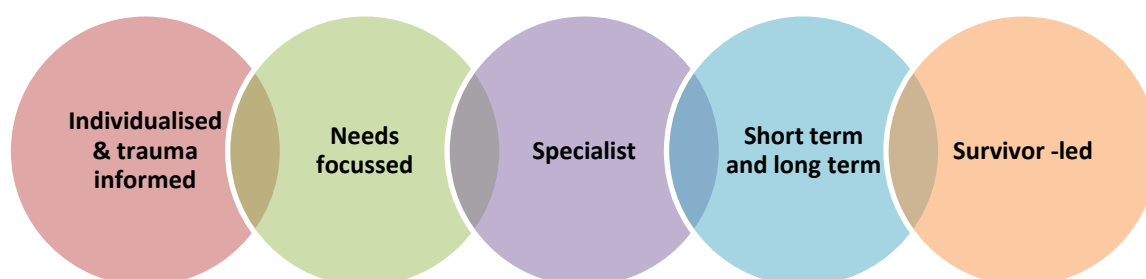
### **3.2 Prevention**

Work around prevention was seen by all respondents as vital in our approach – starting from primary-aged children right up to faith leaders, community leaders and senior level

professionals. Prevention work with young people needs to not just focus on schools but reach out to all youth spaces across the borough. Likewise, prevention work with communities needs to target all communities.

### 3.3 Support

The consultation process showed that there are 5 elements to providing appropriate support to all victim/survivors who have experienced any form of violence against women and girls. Barriers to accessing support differed depending on the consultation group but there was a cross-cutting barrier around people not disclosing as they did not understand what constituted abuse or had practical or structural barriers meaning a greater focus on understanding the complex range of victim/survivors in the borough. The main gap that has been identified is the perceived lack of multi-agency working of some statutory and voluntary organisations in the borough. For survivors it was a need to have survivor led spaces combined with a two pronged approach of crisis-support and ongoing emotional and practical support as risks reduced.



### 3.4 Perpetrator Accountability

Again, the consultation stressed that there needs to be a coordinated approach across the whole community as well as greater awareness amongst professionals to support perpetrators to change their behaviours. Underpinning the approach needed was the need for the whole borough to work together to have a zero tolerance approach.

## 4 Key Messages

The key take away messages from the 3 groups – survivor consultation, young people and local residents and professionals had cross-cutting similarities but also nuanced difference pertaining to the individual group. There was consensus to build upon the draft strategy and work already ongoing to address violence against women and girls in the borough but to develop and enhance linkages across the community and statutory and voluntary services. We will be taking away these messages to ensure that the strategy is influenced by key messages from the consultation.

#### Survivor Key Messages

- Holding a public awareness campaign working across the whole community is key to change attitudes and develop the coordinated community response
- Delivery of training to professionals on how to support survivors of VAWG with an empathetic approach as well as identifying and working with perpetrators is vital.
- Perpetrators should be given support to understand the consequences of their behaviour

- There should be sustainably funded specialist support services which are tailored to individual victim/survivors.
- Short term and long term support should be provided aimed at addressing needs across victim/survivors' journeys to recovery.
- Services need to provide opportunities to increase women's confidence and independence and empower them to rebuild their lives after abuse.
- There is a need for culturally specific services and for services to be available in different languages.
- Information must be available to women who are experiencing abuse at a range of locations that they access e.g. supermarkets, churches, mosques, synagogues and community venues.

### **Young people's Key Messages**

- Develop the work on prevention in schools to ensure that all young people from primary age are getting the right messages
- Development a youth champions/peer support programme, recognising that young people will often identify more with and disclose abuse to other young people.
- Work with local media to highlight messages for the whole community and utilise social media more to ensure that all young people see positive messages
- Highlight where young people can get support and ensure that all services are developed with young people for young people.
- Develop volunteering and work experience opportunities for young people
- Work with parents so that they understand the issues that young people face and can support their children, as well as other parents and their local communities.

### **Professionals' and Local Residents' Key Messages**

- Redesign the coordinated community response approach
- Prevention should be a key priority
- Victim/Survivors should have a range of routes for access to specialist support services, including from within mainstream services as well as a choice of specialist support services.
- Develop work across sectors, including having a renewed focus on women experiencing multiple disadvantage and work with older and disabled women.
- Develop a survivors' forum
- Commission services for young people experiencing VAWG
- Professionals need to have a greater understanding of working with perpetrators