



**Haringey** Council

Agenda item:

**Cabinet 16<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

Report Title: 2<sup>nd</sup> Haringey Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence Strategy

Forward Plan reference number 17

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

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Key Decision**

**1. Purpose (That is, the decision required)**

1.1 To approve the 2<sup>nd</sup> Haringey Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence Strategy

**2. Introduction by Cabinet Member**

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.

One incident of Domestic or Gender Based Violence is one too many. It is our aim in Haringey to achieve zero tolerance of Domestic and Gender Based Violence. To do this we listen closely to survivors and have a flourishing multi agency partnership to empower survivors of Domestic and Gender Based Violence to make the choice most suited to their situation and the one which ensures their safety. We know that the most severe

form of Domestic and Gender Based Violence results in murder. In Haringey we need to do all we can to ensure no one is murdered as a result of Domestic or Gender Based Violence by providing survivors with a wide range of effective choices to end the suffering caused by Domestic and Gender Based Violence.

### **3. Recommendations**

3.1 That the Cabinet:

- i. Approve the strategic aims of the Domestic Violence and Gender based Violence Strategy
- ii. Approve the actions to be completed to implement this strategy
- iii. Note the achievements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Haringey Domestic Violence Strategy

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

Contact Officers: Eve Featherstone, Principal Equalities Officer, Tel. Ext. 2583; Deirdre Cregan Domestic Violence Co-ordinator, Tel. Ext. 2581

### **4. Chief Financial Officer Comments**

4.1 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.

### **5. Head of Legal Services Comments**

5.1 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.

### **6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

Haringey Community Strategy 2007 – 2016  
Haringey Community Safety Plan 2008 – 2011

Local Area Agreement Domestic Violence targets:

- Reduce repeat victimisation
- Increase the rate of sanctioned detections

1<sup>st</sup> Haringey Domestic Violence Strategy, 2004 - 2008

Haringey Alcohol Strategy, 2008 – 2011

Haringey Children and Young People's Plan, 2006 - 2009

Safeguarding Adults Policy 2008 -2012

## 7. Strategic Implications

7.1 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).

7.2 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.

7.3 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 Hearthstone; 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.

7.4 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.

7.5 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.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 The expectation is that costs associated with developing the strategy will be contained within existing resources.

8.2 In practice the strategy, which aims to move towards closer joint planning and working across the council and with partner agencies in tackling Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence should increase value for money and direct resources in a more efficient and effective manner.

## **9. Legal Implications**

9.1 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.

## **10. Equalities Implications**

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken and is published on the councils website. This found that the implementation of the Strategy will enable the local authority and its partners to improve the safety of people whom experience domestic violence in Haringey, the majority of whom are women and children. The EIA has identified under-representation of disabled people, lesbians, gay men and bisexual people in specialist Domestic Violence services.

The strategy will also enable the Council to counteract crimes perpetrated on a gender basis, such as 'Honour Based Violence', Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage and Human Trafficking for the purchase and selling of sexual services by women.

## **11. Consultation**

11.1 The strategy was commissioned by the Domestic Violence Partnership Board and was the subject for consultation at a stakeholder's conference in November 2007 where workshops were held to consult key partner agencies on the focus and priorities of the strategy. The Domestic Violence Forum also was consulted at a separate meeting regarding the key areas for action. The views of the Domestic Violence Expert Users group have also been incorporated as has feedback from service users at Hearthstone, the Domestic Violence advice and support centre. The Domestic Violence Partnership Board meeting on 10 July 2008 discussed the strategy and gave comments and amendments in consultation workshops.

## **12. Background**

Haringey has an excellent track record in dealing with crime. In Haringey all crime types have gone down with, for example a 15% reduction in assaults. Domestic Violence constitutes 30 per cent of all violent crime in Haringey.

Haringey Police Community Safety Unit has the best detection rate for Domestic Violence crimes. In 2006/7 the police recorded 3310 incidents of Domestic Violence in Haringey and 3028 in 2007/8. In 2006/7 there were no domestic violence murders in Haringey. Hearthstone Domestic Violence Advice and Support Centre supports 1200 survivors of Domestic Violence each year.

Wards in the East of the Borough are by far the worst affected by Domestic Violence. Some contributing factors are higher levels of deprivation and high density housing. Haringey's 1<sup>st</sup> Domestic Violence strategy, 2004 – 2008 produced excellent results and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Domestic Violence and Gender Based Strategy builds on this success and develops those areas which continue to require committed resources and focus. The expansion of Hearthstone in 2008 will mean an increase in specialist services and will be the locus for much of the good practice cited in this strategy.

## **13. Conclusion**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Haringey Domestic Violence and Gender Based Strategy is a comprehensive and far-reaching policy which will put Haringey at the fore-front of best practice in supporting the survivors of Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence, particularly those who face multiple difficulties in surviving these violent crimes.

## **14. Use of Appendices / Tables / Photographs**

14.1 Draft 2<sup>nd</sup> Haringey Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence Strategy and Action Plan, 2008 – 2012