

Safer, Stronger Select Committee		
Report Title	Violence Against Women And Girls Plan 2017-21	
Key Decision	No	Item No. 6
Ward	All	
Contributors	Head of Crime Reduction and Supporting People.	
Class	Part 1	Date: 26 June 2017

1.0 Reason for lateness

- 1.1 This report is late due to difficulties in accessing the required data. This report is urgent because the plan needs to be agreed as soon as possible as the old plan ran out in April 2017.

2.0 Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 Lewisham Council has a long history of commitment to tackling the Violence against Woman and Girls agenda. This work is supported by a unified and comprehensive approach to tackling violence against women and girls through a systemic refreshed 4 year VAWG Plan.
- 2.3 As with all partnership intelligence development documents it is likely priorities may be revised as further information on all strands of VAWG becomes available. All local partners are committed to dealing with any aspects of VAWG and will be reviewing and reassessing areas annually.
- 2.4 The attached DRAFT plan outlines all strands of VAWG and the focus for the next 4 years, aligning with the Safer Lewisham Plan 17/18 and the London Mayors Offices Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021.

3.0 Recommendations

- For the committee to feedback any comments before the final report is agreed in July 2017.
- To agree that the progress made against the Plan be reported to the Select Committee annually.

4.0 Background

- 4.1 Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is both a form of discrimination and a violation of human rights. It is both a cause and consequence of gender inequality in society. The United Nations (UN) defines VAWG as “any act of gender-based violence that is directed at a woman because she is a woman, or acts of violence which are

suffered disproportionately by women”¹. This definition is also endorsed by the London Mayor’s Office on Police and Crime, (MOPAC). The Safer Lewisham Partnership has recognised the significant impact these areas have on females, but also recognises that for some of these strands male victims require focus and greater understanding.

- 4.2 Lewisham launched its first VAWG Plan in 2014. Since then, the VAWG legislative and policy context has developed considerably. A range of new legislative measures have been introduced including specific offences of stalking, forced marriage, failure to protect from Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and revenge pornography, as well as a new specific offence of “coercive control”. Other key legislative developments include the introduction of the Modern Slavery Act (2015), the rolling out of Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) and the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS), the introduction of FGM Protection Orders and a revised statutory guidance on Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs). HM Government has released a new national strategy, *Ending Violence Against Women and Girls 2016-20*. The refreshed strategy retains the framework of Prevention, Provision of services, Partnership working and Pursuing perpetrators.
- 4.3 The Safer Lewisham Partnership has committed to a focused response to this issue and has adopted the London Mayors Policing and Crime Plan 2017-2021. In this Plan there is a clear recognition of this issue across London, and is committing to undertaking reviews and funding to support this agenda. Lewisham will play a key role in the London agenda and offer and work collaboratively to ensure that there is a comprehensive offer for residents in Lewisham affected by any strands within VAWG. MOPAC plan a release of their refreshed VAWG Strategy in November 2017, (building on from the Mayoral Strategy on Violence Against Women and Girls 2013-17).
- 4.4 Whilst the partnership acknowledges and supports the VAWG principles held by central Government and London Mayor’s Office of Policing and Crime (MOPAC), it is worth noting that Lewisham will include children and young people within the Plan, as well as recognising elder abuse. In Lewisham, domestic violence and abuse is a priority for the Lewisham Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB), and has been flagged as a priority within the Lewisham Safeguarding Children’s Board’s (LSCB) Neglect Strategy, underpinning work for 2017 and going forward.
- 4.5 It is acknowledged that **men and boys** will also experience and be affected by the range of issues that encompass the VAWG strands and Lewisham’s response includes these. The term violence against women and girls can be accompanied by concern about the exclusion of men and boys from services and a lack of recognition that they can experience these forms of violence and abuse. This does not detract from the clear focus on this agenda affecting women and girls disproportionately, and the approach is tailored accordingly.

¹ ‘The Way Forward. Taking Action to end violence against women and girls’, Mayor of London 2010-2013

4.6

It is recognised that people may be impacted by more than one type of abuse and that the intersectional nature of each person's identity will frame their experience and how they access support. As such, the partnership is committed to increasing reporting rates and providing support and appropriate services for male and Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender (LGBT) victims. Agencies developing clear pathways to support all victims of all gender-based abuse is crucial.

4.7 **The approach:**

- Reducing levels of violence and exposure to violence
- De-normalising violence – **it is unacceptable**
- Understanding and addressing the root causes of violence
- Taking a life course approach whereby the benefit is of effective, evidence based interventions accumulate from the beginning of life
- Building on the positive assets of people and their communities
- Ensuring our services are accessible and effective at addressing holistic young people, family and peer group needs

4.8 The Plan sets out the following Priorities:

- Protecting and Educating
- Deliver the right support
- Working together
- Ensure perpetrators are held to account
- Understanding the issues and having an impact

5.0 **The Vision for Lewisham to 2021**

- Improved safety, health and wellbeing of young people and victims supported by the VAWG services in Lewisham
- Everyone, Family, friends, communities and practitioners, knows about all forms of violence against women and girls and how to disclose abuse and get support. Everyone knowing how to support victims, including those with care and support needs.
- Women, particularly those from different cultural backgrounds, have an increased awareness of violence against women and girls.
- Services take a trauma informed approach to supporting victim/survivors, recognising their range of support needs
- Implementing the learning from tragic Domestic Homicide Reviews
- Increase percentage of crime outcomes rates for all strands of VAWG, if this is what the victim wishes as an outcome
- Increase the number of domestic violence perpetrators engaged in directed programmes

- Improved victim satisfaction within the criminal justice services
- Reduction in the percentage of repeat victimisation.
- More community groups and informal networks are safe spaces for disclosure. All victims have the confidence to approach any service and know that they will be supported.
- Agencies are working together with community and faith leaders to challenge views that perpetuate violence against women and girls.
- Equality of approach; improved understanding, assessment and recognition about the individual and contextual risks associated with VAWG

5.1 This Plan is to be agreed at the SLP in July and will form the basis of focused work by all over the next 4 years.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 The SLP currently monitors the spend and forthcoming resource challenges will need to be considered in line with this agenda and offer.

7.0 Legal & Human Rights Implications

7.1 The Council is under a number of statutory obligations to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the Council to formulate and implement a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder; the Anti Social Behaviour 2003 requires the Council as a local housing authority to have policies and procedures for dealing with anti-social behaviour and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places the Council under a duty to have, when carrying out its functions, due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between persons of different racial groups.

7.2 The Local Government Act 1999 places a duty on the local authorities to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised having regard to the combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

7.3 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 empowers the local authority to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of all or any persons within the local authority's area.

7.4 These statutory duties amongst others feed into the Council's Safer Lewisham Strategy.

8.0 Equalities Implications

8.1 Developing safe and secure communities is central to the work of the Council as a whole and in particular to the Community Services directorate. Reducing and preventing crime, reducing fear of crime and supporting vulnerable communities is critical to the well-being of all our citizens.

9.0 Crime and Disorder Implications

- 9.1 Section 17 places a duty on partners to do all they can to reasonably prevent crime and disorder in their area. The level of crime and its impact is influenced by the decisions and activities taken in the day-to-day of local bodies and organisations. The responsible authorities are required to provide a range of services in their community from policing, fire protection, planning, consumer and environmental protection, transport and highways. They each have a key statutory role in providing these services and, in carrying out their core activities, can significantly contribute to reducing crime and improving the quality of life in their area.

10.0 Environmental Implications

- 10.1 All appropriate services are consulted about on agreed activity before proceeding where Key decisions made may have environmental implications

For further information on this report please contact Geeta Subramaniam-Mooney Head of Crime Reduction & Supporting People, Directorate for Community Services on 020 8 314 9569