



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Cabinet Report

Thursday 16 February 2023

Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy 2023 - 2025

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Kelly Middleton - Cabinet Member: Leisure, Public Health and Well-Being, Equalities and Partnerships
Lead Director:	Liz Noakes - Director: Health & Wellbeing
Service Area:	Health & Wellbeing
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Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key Decision:	Key Decision
Forward Plan:	18 January 2023
Report considered by:	SMT – 17 January 2023 Business Briefing – 26 January 2023 Cabinet – 16 February 2023

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

Cabinet is asked to:

- 1.1 approve the Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy 2023-2025
- 1.2 agree that the Council sign up to the Child to Parent Abuse Covenant.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 This report introduces the refreshed Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy 2023-2025 developed by the new Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board during 2022.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Domestic abuse is an unacceptable and serious issue for many of our residents which wrecks lives and devastates families. It is that estimated one in four women

and one in six men experience domestic abuse at some point in their lives, but we know that it is underreported. While women are significantly and disproportionately affected by domestic abuse which is perpetrated by men, we also recognise that there are male victims and female perpetrators. Domestic abuse in same sex relationships is also an important problem and people who are lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender (LGBTQ+) are significantly affected.

- 3.2 The Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy for 2019-2021 was approved by Cabinet in December 2019, and the key priority was to develop local services and support for victims, children and young people affected as well as perpetrators. The implementation of the strategy, like many other plans, was affected by the pandemic during 2020 and 2021. However there was particular emphasis on people affected by domestic abuse during the pandemic and the Council commissioned and publicised extra support given the heightened concern for victims during national lockdowns.
- 3.3 The long awaited Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (DA Act), provided new context, duties and responsibilities for local authorities and partners. In Summer 2021 the Council commissioned the national domestic abuse charity SafeLives to support the local implementation of the DA Act through the newly established Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (DALP).
- 3.4 The Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Forum which has been developing and growing since 2020, is a network of stakeholders, champions, volunteers, community organisations and service providers offering a strong community voice of lived experience. The Forum Chair is the Vice Chair of the DALP. Our forum was commended for the authenticity of the voice of local domestic abuse survivors by SafeLives and it has also recently gained national recognition by the national Domestic Abuse Commissioners Office.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

- 4.1 The strategy refresh has been developed by strategic partners on the DALP Board and through the DA Forum and the proposals are based on: the expectations of the DA Act, the external SafeLives review recommendations, local intelligence and crucially insight from local survivors and victims. (Appendix 1)
- 4.2 The strategy proposals are set out across the following framework:
- **Partnership** – intelligence-led outcomes focused change shaped by survivors, through collaborative leadership, partnership working and a skilled workforce
 - **Provision** – developing services, support and safer accommodation to reduce impact and minimise harm by systematically offering integrated, tailored whole family services and support at the right time
 - **Prevention** - educating, intervening early and changing attitudes to reduce the incidents of domestic abuse across our community through effective awareness, prevention and education programmes and a culture of early intervention

- **Pursuing and Protection** – ensuring justice, recovery and ongoing protection through effective, engaged, supportive, responsive and timely protection and justice and a multi-agency approach to perpetrators

A detailed action plan has been developed to support the DALP monitor the implementation of the strategy.

4.3 A new integrated service and support offer is currently being commissioned by the Council as part of the provision strand of the strategy. This will be a lead provider model based on a collaboration between specialist domestic abuse providers, accommodation providers and community organisations. The key elements in the new service, which will be operational from June 2023, are as follows:

- **Single Point of Contact** – for effective referral and coordination
- **Specialist Support for Victims and Families** – individual and group support
- **Specialist Support for Children and Young People** – linking with the Council's Strengthening Families and Family Safeguarding Teams
- **Safer Accommodation** – to meet the increase in demand and specific requirements of the DA Act
- **Perpetrator Behaviour Change** – building on the local perpetrator programme commissioned in 2021

A set of key performance indicators to monitor the impact and delivery of the new service is embedded in the commissioning process and this will form a key part of the performance and outcomes framework which will be used by the DALP to track the implementation and success of the strategy.

4.4 Child to Parent Abuse (CPA) is a particular type of domestic abuse which incorporates a whole spectrum of behaviours including: physical, financial, emotional and sexual abuse. PEGS (Parental Education Growth Support), a not-for-profit social enterprise based in Shrewsbury, is funded by the Council to support parents, carers and guardians impacted by Child to Parent Abuse. PEGS have developed a Child to Parent Abuse Covenant for organisations to support parents, carers and guardians affected. PEGS are working in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions to promote the Covenant and the positive impacts of employers signing up. As part of the strategy implementation the Council and DALP partners are being encouraged to sign up to the CPA Covenant. (Appendix 2)

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 Cabinet could decide not to update the Domestic Abuse Strategy or to not sign up to the Child to Parent Abuse Covenant. To do so would however mean that the Council would be failing to comply with best practice and legislation governing this area.

6.0 Key Risks

6.1 There are clear responsibilities and duties for local authorities set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and this strategy includes local implementation of those expectations. The Council is funded to deliver these duties through the Domestic Abuse Grant and there are associated monitoring returns tracking the spend of this funding in-line with the duties of the Act. The Domestic Abuse Commissioners Office for England & Wales is a member of the Telford & Wrekin DALP.

7.0 Council Priorities

7.1 The domestic abuse agenda contributes to the following Council Priorities:

- Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live
- A community focused innovative council providing effective, efficient and quality services

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 There are several sources of funding in place to fund Domestic Abuse services/strategy. These comprise:

	2022/23 £k	2023/24 £k	2024/25 £k
Government grant	391	398	406
Government Grant brought forward	199		
Public Health reserve	122	56	
On Your Side Programme(includes capital and revenue)	300	50	25
Capacity		40	109
PCC funding	71		
Total	1,083	544	540

Committed expenditure in year 2022/23 currently total around £500k.

In 2023/24 Government grant is to increase to £398k and increasing again in 2024/25 to £406k. It is not yet known whether PCC funding is confirmed beyond 2022/23.

The strategy will be delivered from within the resources available above and there are no further requirements for resources arising from adopting the Domestic abuse strategy 2023-25.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

9.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29th April 2021 and defines domestic abuse (Section 1) and children as victims (Section 3).Part

2 ,when in force ,sets out the duties of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner and the duty of public authorities ,including local authorities and partners ,to cooperate with the Commissioner.

- 9.2 Section 57 (in force 01.10.2021) sets out the duties of local authorities to provide support to victims , to prepare and publish a strategy for such and to monitor and evaluate the strategy's effectiveness.
- 9.3 Section 58 requires local authorities to appoint Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Boards to advise local authorities about the exercise of their Section 57 functions Section 59 requires local authorities to submit an annual report to the Secretary of State at the end of each financial year. Section 60 requires local authorities to exercise their functions under the Act in accordance with statutory guidance (published on 08.07.2022).
- 9.4 In respect of HR implications the proposals contained in this report can be delivered using existing resources.

10.0 Ward Implications

- 10.1 There are no specific Ward Implications arising from this report.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 11.1 Domestic abuse is a significant issue in our communities given the impact on individuals and families affected, especially children and young people. It is well known that domestic abuse is an adverse childhood experience which can have life long effects and that it also has the potential to cause trauma in adults.
- 11.2 Reducing the impact of domestic abuse is of particular concern to the Safeguarding Children's Board and Safeguarding Adults Board and both boards receive regular updates from the DALP.
- 11.3 There are overlaps between the domestic abuse agenda and the Building Safer Stronger agenda, given the shared commitment to tackling behaviours and attitudes in our communities, especially in respect to violence against women and girls.
- 11.4 The local NHS organisations are key members of both the DALP and the DA Forum, and NHS services have a key role to play in identifying patients affected by domestic abuse and them referring appropriately for specialist services and support.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 12.1 The Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Forum is a network of more than 50 organisations and individuals representing local communities and our strong local lived experience voice continues to evolve. Work is on-going in the forum to strengthen connections with the Interfaith Council and other faith organisations and the LGBTQ+ community.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

13.1 There are no Climate Change and Environmental Implications arising from this report.

14.0 Background Papers

None

15.0 Appendices

- A Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy Draft 2023 – 2025
- B Child to Parent Abuse Covenant

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Legal	27/01/2023	31/01/2023	KF
Finance	11/01/2023	13/01/2023	RP
Director	11/01/2023	11/01/2023	LN