



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Cabinet

11 June 2026

Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy Refresh 2026-2028

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Kelly Middleton – Cabinet Member: Public Health and Unlocking Opportunities for All
Lead Director:	Helen Onions – Director of Public Health
Service Area:	Health & Wellbeing
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Key Decision	Yes
Wards Affected:	All Wards
Forward Plan:	Yes – 14 May 2026
Report considered by:	SMT - 12 May 2026 Business Briefing – 21 May 2026 Cabinet – 11 June 2026

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Acknowledge the impact of the domestic abuse strategy programme over the past three years, in terms of raising awareness of the agenda and offering expanded support to more residents who are affected.
- 1.2 Approve the refreshed Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy for 2026 – 2028.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To receive an update on the Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy 2023-2025 implementation, and to introduce proposals for the refreshed strategy for

2026-2028, which incorporates more strongly the Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) and prevention agenda.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy 2023-2025 was approved by Cabinet in February 2023. The governance and oversight of strategy implementation is provided through the Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (DALP), chaired by the Executive Director for Children's Services and Public Health. Alongside the DALP, a local multi-agency Domestic Abuse Forum, brings together a wide range of partners in operational and community roles, to develop annual action plans to implement the strategy commitments. The DA Forum has a strong lived experience voice, and the independent forum chair is a member of the strategic DALP board.
- 3.2 The 2023-2025 strategy is structured around four pillars: Partnership, Prevention, Provision, and Pursuing & Protection. The draft refreshed strategy (Appendix) highlights notable achievements delivered in partnership during the last three years under the four pillars.
- 3.3 A well-attended local stakeholder event held at Park Lane Centre in March 2025, captured local innovation and good practice in programmes and interventions for preventing and reducing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).
- 3.4 In December 2025 the Government published an ambitious strategy *Freedom from Violence and Abuse*, aimed at halving VAWG over the next ten years. The national strategy focuses on three areas; prevention and early intervention, support, and relentless pursuit of perpetrators. Unfortunately, no additional funding has been made available to local authorities to implement the national VAWG strategy locally.
- 3.5 As reported in the May Cabinet Building Safer Stronger report the violence against women and girls agenda is aligned with the DALP programme, specifically in relation to initiatives such as targeted education for young people on sexual exploitation, violence and unhealthy relationships, the White Ribbon campaign, and the successful target hardening programme, which improves home security for those at risk.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

- 4.1 The refreshed Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2026-2028 incorporates our local response to the national VAWG strategy. The overall strategy aim is - **working together to end domestic abuse and violence against women and girls in our communities - in all its forms, ensuring that everyone who is affected can access the help and services they need.**

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4.2 The existing four strategy pillars have proved to be a clear and useful strategic framework for the work programme, and it is proposed that these pillars remain as the underlying framework for the 2026-2028 refreshed strategy.

4.3 The refreshed Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy proposes four commitments under each of the four pillars.

4.3.1 **Partnerships:** commitments will be achieved by driving change shaped by survivors, through collaborative leadership, partnership working and a skilled workforce, as follows:

- Strengthen partnership working at all levels through the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board and Domestic Abuse Forum.
- Support the Lived Experience Advisory Forum (LEAF) to give local survivors a voice, with a particular focus on seldom heard and more marginalised groups.
- Agree a framework for data collection from all safe accommodation providers, including information on protected characteristics, and incorporate into DALP dashboard.
- Refresh the safe accommodation needs assessment annually and update every three years.

4.3.2 **Prevention:** commitments will be achieved through effective awareness, prevention and education programmes and a culture of early intervention, as follows:

- Educate young people about sexual exploitation, sexual violence and unhealthy relationships, challenging attitudes that enable abuse.
- Expand the reach of the annual White Ribbon campaign across our communities and into schools.
- Improve the safety of women and girls in the Night-time Economy.
- Provide screening and other interventions to prevent and respond to violence affecting woman throughout pregnancy and after childbirth.

4.3.3 **Provision:** commitments will be achieved by systematically offering integrated, tailored whole family services and support at the right time, as follows:

- Promote details of local support services, particularly the telephone helpline number.
- Strengthen pathways between the domestic abuse service for adults, children and young people, and other support services.
- Further increase the availability of safe accommodation to meet individual needs, with a particular focus on one and two bed units.
- Target harden survivor's homes, through strengthened security and surveillance, so that they can continue living there safely.

4.3.4 **Pursuing and Protection:** commitments will be achieved through effective, engaged, supportive, responsive and timely protection and justice and a multi-agency approach to perpetrators, as follows:

- Continue to support local victims through court proceedings and civil remedies.
- Challenge perpetrators to recognise and modify their behaviours through evidence-based perpetrator programmes and interventions.
- Implement all recommendations from the independent Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference MARAC¹ review.
- Seek and enforce appropriate legal orders and other restrictive measures to disrupt and prevent abusive behaviour.

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 Local Authorities have duties and responsibilities in relation to their role in domestic abuse local partnerships, strategy development and needs assessment to inform the local service offer, which are set out in sections below. In this context and given the strong partnership engagement and consensus on these strategy proposals alternative options are not recommended.

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 its duties through the Local Authority Domestic Abuse Grant, and there are associated MHCLG monitoring returns which track 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 programme 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 The budget for 2025/26 for funding domestic abuse services was funded from Government provided Domestic Abuse Grant £506k, £180k of previous years resources brought forward, and £123k of other budgeted resources. Total funding

expended in 2025/26 was therefore £694k, and £115k was carried forward into 2026/27.

- 8.2 The resources available in 2026/27 include a continuation of the Domestic Abuse Grant which is now rolled into a package of grants- Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse(DA) grant, the DA grant being £529k, (and indicative for 2027/28 of £548k and for 2028/29 £563k). In addition there is grant rolled forward from 2025/26 to 2026/27 of £115k. There is also additional funding for the Perpetrator programme from reserves, so for 2026/27 total planned expenditure is £648k from available resources for that year.
- 8.3 The plan is to deliver Commitments under the four pillars from within existing resources. As stated earlier in the report there are new contracts to be awarded in 2026. Existing resources are the funding envelope within which the contracts should be funded, and additionally the Council has committed to provide funding for VAWG strategy commitments - £36k in 2026/27 and £67k in 2027/28. Any requirement to meet expenditure outside of these resources would need to be considered as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Perpetrator programmes are not eligible under the terms of the DA grant and is currently being met by one off resources. These are planned until and including 2027/28, and further consideration will need to be given to the continuation of this programme in years beyond 2027/28.
- 8.4 Governance and Oversight of the strategy and programme implementation is provided by the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board and the financial performance against all available resources is reported on a regular basis.

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's 2 and 4 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, details include:
- 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.
 - 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).

This is also to be read in light of the creation of the DHR panel by the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004, SAR panel creation and the duty to promote individual well-being under the Care Act 2014, Children Act 1989 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 duties to safeguard children appropriately. Priority need can be conferred under the Housing Act 1996 in respect of domestic abuse.

- 9.2 Following the relaunch of our Corporate Domestic Abuse Policy in 2021 and commitment through signing the GMB 'Work to Stop Domestic Abuse' Charter, the Council has introduced a Domestic Abuse Ambassadors Network. It represents the next step in strengthening our employee led support offer, joining five established employee networks (Race Equality, Disability, LGBTQ+, Neurodiversity and Armed Forces) and four support and champion groups (Menopause Champions, Mental Health First Aiders, Grief First Aiders and Inclusive Recruitment Champions) as our fifth dedicated employee support group.

10.0 Ward Implications

- 10.1 All Wards affected.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 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.
- Reducing the impact of domestic abuse is of particular concern to the Safeguarding Children Board (SCB) and Safeguarding Adults Board, and both Boards receive regular updates from the DALP. There is a SCB sub-group which focusses on the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people.
- There are overlaps between the domestic abuse agenda and the Community Safety and Building Safer Stronger Communities agenda, given the shared commitment to tackling negative and inappropriate behaviours and attitudes in our communities, especially in respect to violence against women and girls.
- The local NHS organisations are key members of both the DALP and the DA Forum, and NHS services have an important role to play in identifying patients affected by domestic abuse and them referring appropriately for specialist services and support. At the time of writing, the ICB Designated Adult Safeguarding Lead is the Vice Chair of the DALP.

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, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

13.1 None.

14.0 Background Papers

- 1 Borough of Telford and Wrekin Cabinet 16 February 2023: Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy 2023 - 2025

15.0 Appendices

- A Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse and VAWG Strategy Draft 2026-2028

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Director	23/04/2026	23/04/2026	HO
Finance	23/04/2026	06/05/2026	DTW
Legal	23/04/2026	15/05/2026	ON

¹ A Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is a regular local meeting where professionals discuss the safety of victims (and their children) at high risk of murder or serious harm due to domestic abuse. It brings together police, health, child protection, housing, and IDVAs to create a joint, tailored safety plan.