

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Record of Cabinet Member Decision

The call-in has expired and the Decision can be implemented.

- Draft Decision List published on: 31 October 2025
- Confirmed Decision List published on: 5 November 2025

1. **TITLE:** Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) procurement strategy
2. **DECISION MADE BY:** Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion and Community Safety

3. **DECISION:**

1. Appendix 1 is not for publication on the basis that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as set out in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).
2. To approve the proposed procurement strategy for VAWG services through a competitive tender process.

4. **REASON FOR DECISION:**

To ensure continuity of vital VAWG services through timely recommissioning while refreshing the model in response to local evidence, system needs, and survivor voices.

5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

Option 1: Deliver the supplies, services, and/or works in-house (make/buy decision) – Not recommended

1. While bringing the services in-house would give the Council direct oversight and alignment with internal strategic objectives, this option is not recommended due to several limitations. The Council lacks the specialist expertise required to deliver effective VAWG services, especially those supporting the intersectional needs of diverse communities, including LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning, with the plus sign signifying other identities related to sexual orientation or gender) survivors and individuals from Black and global majority backgrounds. Removing these services from community-based organisations would reduce accessibility and specialist capacity, undermining current commitments set out in the Council's VAWG strategy.

Option 2: Decommission the service or requirement – Not recommended

2. Decommissioning has been considered but ruled out due to ethical and legislative factors: The Council's VAWG strategy includes clear commitments to improving responses to violence against women and girls, and service removal would contradict these aims. Furthermore, the UK Government has publicly committed to

halving VAWG, and local authorities play a key role in delivering this outcome. The 2024 Victims and Prisoners Act introduces a statutory duty for relevant authorities to collaborate in commissioning support for survivors, ceasing services would breach this duty. Decommissioning would also result in reputational harm, exacerbate unmet need, and disproportionately impact vulnerable communities.

Option 3: Single Borough Commissioning – Not recommended

3. Commissioning services independently within LBHF presents benefits in terms of local autonomy but has substantial limitations: Benchmarking shows that boroughs commissioning alone often struggle to sustain a comprehensive service offer due to constrained funding. Smaller procurement scopes reduce market interest from specialist providers and restrict access to intersectional services. This model limits the ability to meet diverse survivor needs across the borough and poses risks to continuity and service quality.

Option 4: Commission with Neighbouring Boroughs – Recommended

4. Joint commissioning with WCC and RBKC is the recommended route for this procurement. Completing a competitive procedure through publication on capitalEsourcing for each lot led by the Council. Following the tender exercise all boroughs will have their own contracts. This model has proven to deliver tangible benefits including:
 - A more robust and sustainable funding envelope that supports enhanced value for money;
 - Access to a wider range of specialist suppliers and service areas, including trauma-informed support for historically underserved survivor groups;
 - Recognition as best practice across London and alignment with statutory duties outlined in the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024; and
 - The ability to maintain sovereign contracts with the successful provider, allowing the Council to track borough-specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and retain flexibility to amend services post-award.

6. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS GRANTED:

None.

Date of Decision
31 October 2025