

Social Inclusion and Community Safety Policy and Accountability Committee Agenda

Wednesday 30 April 2025 at 7.00 pm

145 King Street (Ground Floor), Hammersmith, W6 9XY

Watch the meeting live: youtube.com/hammersmithandfulham

MEMBERSHIP

Administration	Opposition
Councillor Nikos Souslous (Chair) Councillor Omid Miri Councillor Sally Taylor Councillor Lucy Richardson	Councillor Andrew Dinsmore

CONTACT OFFICER: Debbie Yau
Committee Coordinator
Governance and Scrutiny
E-mail: Debbie.Yau@lbhf.gov.uk
Web: www.lbhf.gov.uk/committees

This meeting is open to the public and press. The building has disabled access.

Members of the public are welcome to attend but spaces are limited. If you would like to attend, please contact: Debbie.Yau@lbhf.gov.uk

Date Issued: 22 April 2025

Social Inclusion and Community Safety Policy and Accountability Committee Agenda

30 April 2025

<u>Item</u>		<u>Pages</u>
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE		
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	<p>If a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a particular item, whether or not it is entered in the Authority's register of interests, or any other significant interest which they consider should be declared in the public interest, they should declare the existence and, unless it is a sensitive interest as defined in the Member Code of Conduct, the nature of the interest at the commencement of the consideration of that item or as soon as it becomes apparent.</p> <p>At meetings where members of the public are allowed to be in attendance and speak, any Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest or other significant interest may also make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter. The Councillor must then withdraw immediately from the meeting before the matter is discussed and any vote taken.</p> <p>Where Members of the public are not allowed to be in attendance and speak, then the Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest should withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is under consideration. Councillors who have declared other significant interests should also withdraw from the meeting if they consider their continued participation in the matter would not be reasonable in the circumstances and may give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest.</p> <p>Councillors are not obliged to withdraw from the meeting where a dispensation to that effect has been obtained from the Standards Committee.</p>	
3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS	<p>To approve the minutes of the meetings on 20 November 2024 and 4 February 2025 to be accurate.</p>	4 - 18
4. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS SPOTLIGHT	<p>This report provides the Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise the Council's approach to responding to and preventing Violence Against Women and Girls in Hammersmith & Fulham. It covers the financial period of 2023-2025.</p>	19 - 38

5. GANGS, VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION UNIT SPOTLIGHT

39 - 51

This report provides an update on the work of the Gangs, Violence & Exploitation Unit for financial year 2024/25 alongside sharing information on upcoming projects for the 2025/26 financial year.

6. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting:

- 17 June 2025

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Social Inclusion and Community Safety Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes



Wednesday 20 November 2024

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Nikos Souslous (Chair), Omid Miri, Lucy Richardson and Andrew Dinsmore

Other Councillors: Councillor Rebecca Harvey (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion and Community Safety)

Met Police:

Chief Superintendent Christina Jessah
Superintendent Craig Knight

Officers:

Neil Thurlow (Director of Public Protection)
Debbie Yau (Committee Coordinator)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sally Taylor.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2024 were agreed as an accurate record.

4. UPDATE REPORT ON POLICING IN HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM

Chief Superintendent Christina Jessah gave an update report on policing in Hammersmith and Fulham (H&F), including an update further to the Baroness Casey Review on the work done in the last few months after she had taken up the position as the Chief Superintendent of the Central West Basic Command Unit (BCU) which also covered the Westminster City Council (WCC) and Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC).

Chrissy highlighted the training initiatives in respect of enforcement and prevention had been undertaken and noted that all officers in H&F - from supervisory to PC levels - had attended a 3-day training workshop held across London.

Chief Superintendent Jessah also mentioned about adopting recommendations from the latest HMIC FRS report and enhancing the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) programme by training staff to be active bystanders.

Notwithstanding the above, Chief Superintendent Jessah was regretted to note there were ongoing issues with some officers' misconduct leading to criminal charges with a further news story released the week of PAC.

Superintendent Craig Knight - who was responsible for H&F neighbourhood teams – briefed the Committee on the operational priorities and challenges faced at a local level.

Craig advised that there was a 6% reduction (FYTD) in overall crime in H&F, with notable decreases in robbery (10%), residential burglary (9%) and theft from motor vehicles (47%). Besides, actions had been taken in conjunction with the British Transport Police to tackle theft of mobile phones. He further noted that it was positive to see more people were reporting anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents bringing the FYTD figure to 552 more, and collective actions had been taken alongside individual groups/ organisations to keep people free from ASB.

Chief Superintendent Jessah referred to the significant financial challenges with a projected £450 million budget gap for the Metropolitan Police. Superintendent Knight said the potential budget shortfall would have an impact on frontline service delivery.

Non-crime hate incidents

Councillor Andrew Dinsmore asked about non crime hate incidents, their recordings and impact. Chief Superintendent Jessah noted all non-crime hate incidents were recorded as they might be precursors for crime and contain vast amount of intelligence. There was a dedicated unit within the H&F neighbourhood to deal with these incidents and additional staff training had been provided to improve performance of handling disability or racial hate crimes. In reply to Councillor Dinsmore's further question, she said no team was completely ring-fenced under the current budget situation.

Councillor Omid Miri was concerned about the difference between non-crime hate incidents and hate crime. Chief Superintendent Jessah explained that during the process, the police officers recorded everything and the interpretation would depend on the officer's investigation, the voice of the victim and most importantly, the decision of the Crown Prosecution Service. She agreed with Councillor Miri that both should be taken as the same kind of phenomenon.

Councillor Dinsmore asked whether a repeated offender of non-crime hate incidents would be tipped over into criminal eventually. Chief Superintendent Jessah confirmed that once an incident was recorded, it would stay in the system. While an individual was definitely a cause of concern for having involved in hate incident reports repeatedly, people were however entitled to free speech and opinions.

Stop and Search

Members noted that Stop and Search experienced a decrease in use of 17% across London. In reply to Councillor Miri's question, Superintendent Knight reported that his neighbourhood teams had carried out 117 stop and searches in the past month (versus 22 in January 2024) which represented a 40% increase (FYTD) specific to H&F.

Craig advised that the increase was made possible because the officers using the tactics understood local issues and ward/borough priorities and tackled things that mattered to local people. Having been assured that police officers were properly trained, the local residents now understood the tactic's value of reducing/preventing/detecting crimes and had more confidence in its use. As regards the decreased use of stop and searches across London, Superintendent Knight considered that this might be led by the media's perception on the disproportionate use of the tactic as police officers might be worried about losing their jobs.

Chief Superintendent Jessah highlighted the precise delivery of Stop and Search in H&F, for example, the tactic was frequently used in some crime hotspots like Shepherd's Bush Green which saw a higher number of Stop and Search.

On the Chair's concern about the outcomes of stop and searches, Superintendent Knight noted that the overall outcome rates across London was about 30% (which was 20% or lower some 4 to 5 years ago) versus 31.2% for the H&F neighbourhood teams. Positive outcomes included anything leading to a community resolution to the problems detected. He remarked that there was no KPIs for stop and searches as it was individual officers' on-the-spot decision to use the tactic.

The Chair was concerned about ASB which was one of the top priorities in the H&F wards. Superintendent Knight noted that the power to stop and search was set out in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act which had outlined, among others, the types of stop and search powers which however did not cover ASB.

As regards the ethnicity of people being stopped and searched, Superintendent Knight said according to the overall statistics, it remained disproportionate in terms of the Black/ethnic minority young men being stopped and searched. He noted the figures for H&F varied depending on the types of crime under investigation and

confirmed the outcomes remained broadly similar irrespective of the ethnicity. He also assured the Committee that the Stop and Search Charter which set out what the public could expect during the use of the tactic was underway.

Chief Superintendent Jessah said she and her teams were very mindful in deploying the tactic and made sure it was done according to procedural justice and with some serious level of respect regardless of who was being stopped, including a briefing on why they had been stopped and how they could challenge it formally.

Given the tactic of Stop and Search carried the important function of uncovering crime evidence, Councillor Miri considered police officers should conduct them without fearing vilification/losing their jobs. However, if this powerful tactic was carried out in a wrong approach and made the individuals uncomfortable/inconvenienced, he asked about the recourse available to them.

Chief Superintendent Jessah assured members that an independent supervisor would review the footage recorded on the officer's body worn camera to make sure relevant information was provided to the individual before the search. If necessary, training and support would be provided to the officers who displayed deviation from the normal procedures. While the individuals could lodge direct complaints, any third party who felt impacted after watching the videos on social media might also raise complaints. She added there was a team within the Met that scanned social media for such videos and took follow-up actions proactively.

Superintendent Knight said the number of complaints related to stop and searches in H&F was few. He referred to a Black man who had previously been stopped a number of times had changed his mindset after viewing the body worn videos as a member of the community monitoring group and become supportive of the tactic.

Councillor Lucy Richardson asked whether the mental health training received by the police officers included autism awareness and its correlation with the operational side of police approach. Superintendent Knight referred to the close collaboration with the National Autistic Society of which the specialist trainers had co-produced a training package with the Met Police for delivery during the initial recruitment programmes as well as the yearly supplementary training. The police officers shall learn how to do a stop and search slightly differently for people with autism. In addition, the Met Police had recently launched the autism alert card, which was not currently linked to any database, should be completed, printed off and showed by individuals with autism when they were being stopped. The card explained the cardholder's autism and how best the officer could respond. Responding to Councillor Dinsmore's concern about possible abuse by people claiming having self-diagnosed autism, Superintendent Knight said he had never come across abuse despite it was possible.

Councillor Richardson was concerned about the protection of vulnerable adults such as autistic residents with learning difficulty or social communication disorder as they might fail to carry the autistic alert card and be made to go through the criminal justice system unfairly. She urged that information of vulnerable adults in the borough should form part of the database linked to the emergency service like the Pegasus system used by Nottingham police and a number of other forces. The

autism alert cards should be issued by the system with a pin to deter abuse. Separately, consideration should also be given to extending the opening hours of the safe space for vulnerable adults until the small hours.

While giving his support and undertaking to reflect the need for a shared database like the Pegasus,' Superintendent Knight pointed out that it would be a major procurement across London for use also among other forces/agencies. As regards safe space for vulnerable adults, Superintendent Knight referred to the Police's 24/7 front counter in every borough where staff had been trained to respond and call out the relevant agencies and service accordingly. Councillor Richardson said she was pleased to note there were more joined up services in the borough.

ASB and related crimes

Councillor Dinsmore was concerned about the specific groups involved in ASB. Superintendent Knight referred to the hotspots for ASB which were the same spaces/ cuckooed addresses where violence and street-based drug trafficking were happening. The specificity was geographical in nature.

Councillor Rebecca Harvey (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion and Community Safety) referred to the recent joined-up working between the ASB team of the Law Enforcement Team (LET) and the Police which had done a lot of work together to focus on a specific area the result of which was a significant reduction in drug-related ASB around that part of Shepherds Bush. Local residents - who had been very concerned about the situation previously - showed positive feedback.

Regarding the Chair's concern about the strategy adopted to tackle drug-related activities, Neil Thurlow (Director of Public Protection) remarked that the Council's approach was to be driven by a new Drugs Strategy. The strategy was being developed after reviewing a lot of data including formal complaints, reporting of increased visibility of drug dealings in the borough, complaints received in surgeries and police data and taking into account the current drug intervention offers and the Police's 4E model. The Strategy and its plans for the next few years would be considered by the Cabinet in the coming months.

The Strategy would encourage reporting on drug dealings (reporting might remain anonymous if so wished) and delineate the responsibilities and interventions of the local authority and the police.

Neil noted that drug dealing was a complex supply-and-demand situation across London. He outlined how the victims, including some young people, were targeted and exploited by the dealers which needed to be factored in to the approach. Neil also advised that the Council's Public Health team had been commissioning very good drugs and alcohol services which had some of the highest success rates of recovery in the country.

Superintendent Knight appreciated the work of Public Health which, in his opinion, had a better value for money than enforcement. He noted the proliferation of street-based drug dealing had led to increased retail crime such as shoplifting. While no efforts had been spared to target at individuals supplying Class A drugs in H&F

communities, the approach, for young people, linked to the victim/offender approach and consideration to trafficking so Police, Council and others all work to ensure the young people were supported through conversations and education instead of being focused solely on criminalising. The Police was now gathering meaningful intelligence reviewing the socio-economic nature of those hotspots for street-based drug supply with a view to putting a more proportionate and effective response over a longer-term.

Noting addicts would shoplift repeatedly to fund their drug habits, the Chair asked about the control measures and specific steps in place to deal with shoplifting which had become a matter of grave concern. Superintendent Knight referred to the proactive operations carried out against retail crime, in particular shoplifting. The visible operation held together with the retailers two weeks ago had led to a number of arrests which would help encourage more retailers to take part in joint operations. He noted that similar retail operations had been planned for in the next 5 to 6 weeks.

The Chair highlighted that unlike some offences which had experienced FYTD reduction, sexual offences including domestic abuse had increased 13%. He asked about the causes and measures taken by the Police to address them in addition to the Council's implementation of a Street Harassment Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to improve residents' safety on streets.

Chief Superintendent Jessah considered more cases of sexual offence indicated an increase in people's confidence to report them and their trust in police's further action. She elaborated that the team assigned to deal with sexual assault was now in full strength comprising detective constables who had possessed the required skill set. The BCU had also changed to focus investigations on the offenders rather than resting the burden of proof on the victims. She added that the increased reporting also helped drive up this BCU's positive outcome rates as the number of people being charged or referred to support agencies had also increased considerably. Superintendent Knight noted that the 13% increase was equivalent to 37 more victims. He considered the PSPO introduced by the local authority to curb microaggression on the streets was a groundbreaking initiative which had attracted significant media interest. As ending VAWG remained an important priority of the Police and the borough, he expected to receive more reporting so that the Police could respond and deal with people committing sexual offences.

Neil Thurlow said he was proud to present the Street Harassment PSPO which was the first borough-wide PSPO of its kind and it was believed to be the first to have been enforced by a local authority officer. The powers for the PSPO were also enforceable by police officers too.

Neil highlighted the campaign which encouraged people to report incidents of street harassment and victims might report to the local authority should they prefer to do so. The first fixed penalty notice (PFN) was issued by the LET after the victim reported the case to them and explained what had happened. Neil further outlined the promotion under the 16-Day of Actions commencing 25 November to end VAWG, relevant information and QR code on website, joint engagement session at football clubs, the work of the commissioned special domestic abuse court, experience sharing via walk-and-talk, training received by LET offices on helpful and

sensitive conversations, and bystanders training for residents to undertake meaningful interventions.

On activities to be held for the 16-Day of Actions, Superintendent Knight remarked that a blog by young people about VAWG would be launched at the West Youth Zone. Proactive operations would take place alongside partner agencies to ensure the safe use of public spaces and licensed premises by women and girls.

Recruitment and retention

The Chair asked about the recruitment of PCs and PCSOs newly allocated to H&F about a year ago. Superintendent Knight said as an organisation, the Met was struggling to recruit and was in short of 1,500 officers at the moment (or 2,000 by the end of 2025) which did not match up with the need. However, H&F was doing better than RBKC and WCC in terms of neighbourhood policing staffing position, with promises to fill 2 PCSOs and 1 DWO vacancies shortly. He undertook to provide information on the numbers of PCs and PCSOs in H&F.

ACTION: Superintendent Craig Knight

Chief Superintendent Jessah reassured that in addition to H&F neighbourhood teams, officers from other parts of the Met would support operations in H&F, e.g. those associated with the use of live facial recognition in Westfield and other parts of the borough.

On the Chair's further question about the retention rates, Chief Superintendent Jessah noted that while the attrition rate had slowed down, retention remained a challenge because of the London pay and its cost of living.

Casey Review and New Met for London

Councillor Miri referred to the recent case where two officers from Central West BCU had been charged with alleged sexual assault while off duty. The assault took place last April which was three years after the murder of Sarah Everard. During this period, the New Met for London (NMFL) plan had been implemented with necessary training conducted for all staff. Councillor Miri said he was shocked to learn about the case happened to Central West BCU and asked whether it reflected a success or otherwise of the schemes and proposals being put in place.

Superintendent Knight remarked there were bad people in every organisation and industry. He considered the Met system was good in rooting bad people and removing those found guilty while at the same time ensuring procedural justice. Chief Superintendent Jessah also considered the case was a success as people now were more willing to report and had confidence in the Police's support for the victims. The Met had made it absolutely clear to the workforce that this kind of behaviour would not be tolerated, and it needed time and effort to rebuild public's trust and confidence.

The Chair asked about the recommendation of restoring visible neighbourhood policing in the Casey Review report. Superintendent Knight noted the increase of

about 10% of PCSOs had been directed into more foot patrol based on ward priorities. The recent success in bidding for additional resources would be used to bring more visibility patrolling, including walk-and-talk operations for ending VAWG. Superintendent Knight said he was supportive of high visibility patrol but some operations were covert in nature or needed to be done at the desk. Chief Superintendent Jessah referred to the murder in the borough at the beginning of the summer. She said the visible presence of uniformed officers in the area had helped to restore confidence and trust in the local community.

On the outcomes of the quarterly NMFL meetings held with local residents, Superintendent Knight outlined the attendance of these meetings which had dropped due to capacity constraint of the venue as a result of funding cuts. His team were looking at potential free venues to hold the next NMFL meeting around February/March 2025. Chief Superintendent Jessah expected the Met to do better in strengthening the representation to these meetings, particularly the youth voice.

As regards the partnership between the LET and police officers, Neil Thurlow said the LET's areas of priorities generally aligned with police's ward priorities and the two sides shared information and latest position on certain crimes. This had enabled good community engagement as the LET could provide information readily when being asked.

In addition to formal crime fighting meetings between the LET community safety officers and the ward officers, Neil said he and the two attending officers exchanged information regularly to keep each other and Councillor Rebecca Harvey abreast of all key developments. Neil undertook to provide more details of the proposed crime summit mentioned by Superintendent Knight earlier at a future meeting.

ACTION: Neil Thurlow

Superintendent Knight briefed members on the Live Facial Recognition (LFR) technology which had been used for three occasions in the borough and led to positive arrests. Responding to Councillor Miri's enquiries, he confirmed that the Police-owned technology would scan faces against a watchlist which only included the photos of 12,500 people who were wanted throughout London.

Craig explained how the system worked and advised that, when the LFR was "triggered" it went to an officer(s) on the ground, they then engaged with the person identified and undertook further checks to verify their identities there and then which might lead to further action, or not.

While agreeing to provide information on the frequency of false positives, if any, identified by the LFR technology, Chief Superintendent Jessah said councillors were welcomed to observe its deployment.

ACTION: Chief Superintendent Christina Jessah

On the feasibility of combining the LFR technology with other systems, Superintendent Knight said he understood that the LFR technology could match images fed by CCTV footages. Councillor Dinsmore considered there was no

fundamental difference on the consent given to the use of CCTV camera with or without built-in LFR technology. Chief Superintendent Jessah was concerned about the community's response on privacy. Councillor Miri cautioned about the use of automatic AI systems like the LFR which was immensely powerful and needed to be used in moderation.

Summing up, the Chair thanked the attendance of the Met Police and appreciated their good performance as reflected in the statistics. He looked forward to the next updates on operational achievements in respect of drugs, VAWG, shoplifting and so on.

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted the report.

5. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee noted the following dates of future meetings:

- 4 Feb 2025
- 30 Apr 2025

Work Programmes:

- 2025 Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Third Sector Investment Fund

Meeting started: 7.01 pm
Meeting ended: 8.50 pm

Chair

Contact officer: Debbie Yau
Committee Co-ordinator
Governance and Scrutiny
E-mail: debbie.yau@lbhf.gov.uk

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Social Inclusion and Community Safety Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes



Tuesday 4 February 2025

NOTE: This was held as an informal meeting

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Nikos Souslous (Chair) and Lucy Richardson

Other Councillors: Councillors Rebecca Harvey (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion and Community Safety) and Rowan Ree (Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform)

Officers:

Sukvinder Kalsi (Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services)
Kellie Gooch (Head of Finance – Place)
Bram Kainth (Executive Director of Place)
Neil Thurlow (Director of Public Protection)
Mark Raisbeck (Director of Public Realm)
Mo Basith (LET Manager)
Debbie Yau (Committee Coordinator)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sally Taylor and Omid Miri.

Councillor Andrew Dinsmore who intended to join remotely could not do so due to technical issues.

The Chair noted that the meeting was inquorate and there was no livestreaming.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The approval of the minutes of the meeting on 20 November 2024 would be deferred to the next meeting.

4. SIX-MONTH PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE LAW ENFORCEMENT TEAM

Mo Basith (LET Manager) introduced the work of the Law Enforcement Team (LET) for the six months between June and December 2024, including the work of the borough-wide Street Harassment Public Space Protection Order (PSPO), the commissioning of drugs and alcohol treatment providers, tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB), prevention of knife crimes and joint enforcement against fly-tipping.

Neil Thurlow (Director of Public Protection) highlighted LET's engagement and work with H&F's residents and referred to residents' compliments (pages 14 & 16).

Referring to the graph on Street Population (Engagement/Referral) (page 24), the Chair asked about engagement with homeless people, in particular those rough sleepers around the Hammersmith border areas.

Mo Basith noted a trend where people who were expecting stamped documents from their embassy would sleep on nearby streets to obviate the need of travelling back and forth. The LET had worked closely with the Council's Homelessness Team and removed the homeless people from the streets to, for example, emergency accommodation according to Severe Weather Emergency Protocol or accommodation that met their individual needs. Neil Thurlow clarified that the figures on the graph did not represent the number of rough sleepers but the number of headcounts engaged in that month so there might be multiple counts for the same individual.

The Chair asked about actions taken to enhance the safety of Normand Park such as improvements to the lighting. Mark Raisbeck (Director of Public Realm) noted a recent survey had been carried out by an independent lighting specialist who looked at the safety and security of the Park. It was confirmed that there was a good level supply of lighting which had spread into most of the footpaths at reasonable levels. There was also extensive CCTV coverage. A review would soon be conducted in conjunction with the Police's crime unit to see if additional lighting and CCTV should be provided at specific locations or other measures such as re-designing the path and/or re-locating facilities needed to be done to reduce crimes.

On the big highlights of the past year, Neil Thurlow noted some of the key achievements including the increasing levels of drugs being removed and the number of knives being found. The LET had received other boroughs' enquiries about ways to manage the public space and requests for visits. Besides, LET officers would continue supporting the safety of colleagues working on the Hammersmith Bridge and enhancing the security of the streets near the football clubs.

Regarding the Chair's enquiry about staff recruitment and training, Neil Thurlow said the LET's staffing situation was now stable after experiencing some movement around the management at ward level. As a sizable service, it was natural for LET to always carry vacancies. The constant openings were promoted through more inclusive adverts and in social media. Besides strengthening vetting to recruit suitable officers, the LET also encouraged them to take on more works when there were opportunities so that their expertise and experience could be retained and built on in taking up more senior positions. Mo Basith added that there were retired police, current officers from other boroughs etc applying to join the LET which aimed at recruiting people with the right motivation to enable the LET to make continuous improvements.

In reply to Councillor Lucy Richardson's question about the DBS checks, Mo Basith remarked while adopting the same vetting standard as the police to ensure the new recruits got the right credentials to work, the LET was doing more in the process. For example, the LET would consider whether it was confident in entrusting the potential officer to enter the residents' premises and carry out duty in a caring way to help the residents at a time of need. Neil Thurlow highlighted the ruthless nature of vetting as the family was involved in the procedures. The vetting was very crucial since the new LET officers would be given additional powers to ensure community safety,

Noting that residents might watch this Committee's meetings online or walkabout with the LET, the Chair was concerned about other ways of residents' engagements with the LET. Mo Basith said the LET officers always made themselves available to attend the meetings of the Housing Tenants and Residents' Association (TRAs). In addition, residents might meet LET officers on the first three Mondays of every month in the Central Library or other libraries in the borough. Or residents could get in touch and the LET could set up separate meetings, including walkabouts, to cater for their needs.

Responding to Councillor Richardson's suggestion of providing LET's website information on a physical leaflet or a small card, Neil Thurlow agreed to review what could be done to address this further to the LET's updates in respect of community safety included in future e-news articles and advised that the LET featured in the twice-yearly printed Council's newsletter which was distributed to every household.

Noting an average of 209 patrols had been delivered by the LET per day during the reported period, Councillor Rowan Ree (Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform) considered this a huge amount of visibility given the small size of the borough. He also commended the work of the borough-wide Street Harassment PSPO which in his opinion was difficult to enforce yet highly complimented. In response to his comment, Neil Thurlow agreed to bring more updates to the next report.

Councillor Rebecca Harvey (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion and Community Safety) noted from some residents' emails that there was an intention to scrutinise the LET which had yielded real credits for everything they were doing. Indeed, the BCU's Superintendent was impressed by the work of the LET and CCTV Team which had led to some successful arrests by the Police. The LET was very friendly and supportive that a resigned officer had rejoined the team.

The Committee noted the report.

5. 2025/26 REVENUE BUDGET AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Councillor Rowan Ree (Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform) gave an overview of the 2025/26 Revenue Budget, including the operating environment, additional central government funding and objectives of the financial strategy. He also briefed members on the budget headlines, the provisional settlement of the draft budget and departmental service allocations, the investment and savings proposals, council tax considerations and residual risks in 2025/26. He further highlighted the earmarked reserves forecast and medium-term financial forecast showing the estimated budget gap until 2028/29 as well as the MTFS for 2026/27+. He said the Revenue Budget would be presented to the Cabinet and Full Council later this month having completed all briefings of the Policy and Accountability Committees and Policy Oversight Board. Councillor Ree expressed his gratitude to all Cabinet Members and officers who had worked professionally going through the budgets line by line to make sure every penny counted. Their brilliance efforts shall continue in maintaining the balanced budget in future statements of accounts throughout the years.

Kellie Gooch (Head of Finance – Place) gave a presentation on the budget relevant to this PAC, including the achievements in the past year, the key budget changes in investment (in respect of VAWG, LET, GVEU, digital inclusion strategy and inflationary uplift) and savings as well as the budget risks.

NOTE: The presentation slides are attached in Appendices A & B

The Chair asked the following question on behalf of Councillor Andrew Dinsmore:

“My key question is that I have not been provided with a copy of the full accounts so I cannot ascertain what has been cut from the general budget to feed into SICS PAC or whether all of the increase is due to additional revenue from the 2.99% increase in council tax? I would be grateful if a copy of the accounts and/or an explanation on this point could be provided.”

Councillor Ree noted that Cllr Dinsmore seemed to be a little confused about the process, as the budget was a forward-looking document for the financial year ahead, whereas the accounts were published at the end of the financial year. He pointed out the relevant budget information was all available in the report and presentation he had just given. He said he was happy to provide the information in writing if necessary. At this juncture, Councillor Lucy Richardson expressed her appreciation on the impressive balanced budget in particular the investment in housing.

Noting that the additional external income for CCTV services amounted to £30,000, the Chair sought elaboration. Councillor Ree remarked that the request of Westminster City Council to use the services did reflect the high regard of the current user of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC). He noted H&F's CCTV network was very impressive and recommended members to pay a visit to the control room when there was an opportunity. Councillor Ree said the Council was keen to explore and generate further revenue from the CCTV services.

Councillor Richardson referred to the efficiency savings and asked about how service effectiveness was assessed and monitored and who made the decisions. Sukvinder Kalsi (Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services) assured that in addition to assessment by national or London-wide regulators, Council services were also scrutinised by the External Auditor and subject to internal audits benchmarking those spending in other councils. For services not applicable under the governance checks, they would be assessed based on residents' feedback.

In reply to Councillor Richardson's further question about digital inclusion strategy, Sukvinder Kalsi noted the new investment aimed at addressing digital barriers for residents and services by, among other things, strengthening infrastructure and operating systems to ensure residents were digitally engaged inclusively. He added that the strategy also aimed at reducing resident vulnerability to cyber security. While noting that digital inclusion was a regular item on the agenda of the Policy and Oversight Board, Sukvinder agreed to provide more details about the baseline survey conducted among residents.

ACTION: Sukvinder Kalsi

The Chair noted the additional budget investment included £250k investment in VAWG and asked for the use of the extra funding. Neil Thurlow (Director of Public Protection) highlighted the challenging position of the work around VAWG. As the most committed crime with rising number of victims, the cost for delivering the services was also increasing especially if refugees were involved like a number of them in this Council. The Council paid fairly to retain the best providers who sought to engage in special training to improve the outcomes. Neil also noted that some of the extra funding were used to meet the legal costs of the court cases, spiking inflation, rising interest and cost of living.

The Chair noted the previous reliance on external funding for LET and Gangs Unit would be removed from 2025/26 onward and asked about the other Council priorities that would be supported by the repurposed external funding. Councillor Ree said the fund in the pot would be for general use. Sukvinder Kalsi added that the fund might be used to meet needs arising outside the budget across the Council such as environmental programmes or community activities.

Responding to the Chair's enquiry, Sukvinder Kalsi noted that the Council's Local Support Payments scheme of £600,000 was designed to help the housing needs of residents facing emergencies or crises. This service was currently administered by RBKC, and a saving of £150,000 was included in the 2025/26 budget to be delivered by bringing this service in-house and reducing administration costs. Councillor Rebecca Harvey (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion and Community Safety) recalled that the tri-borough arrangements in administering local social funds was a legacy agreed in 2013 by the previous Administration. She considered it much more efficient and effective by running the service in-house for vulnerable residents.

The Committee noted the report.

6. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Committee noted the Forward Plan:

- 30 April 2025
 - Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) spotlight
 - Gangs, Violence and Exploitation Unit (GVEU) spotlight
- 17 June 2025
 - Annual Report of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act
- 18 Nov 2025
 - Drugs Strategy
 - Police Scrutiny
- 27 Jan 2026 (subsequently changed to 2 Feb 2026)
- 27 April 2026
- 16 June 2026

Meeting started: 7.03 pm
Meeting ended: 8.12 pm

Chair

Contact officer: Debbie Yau
Committee Co-ordinator
Governance and Scrutiny
E-mail: Debbie.Yau@lbhf.gov.uk

Report to: Social Inclusion and Community Safety Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 30/04/2025

Subject: H&F's Approach to Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Report author: Annabel Moores, Strategic VAWG lead and Caterina Giammarresi Castelán, VAWG Programmes and Partnerships Lead

Responsible Director: Mark Raisbeck, Director of Public Realm

SUMMARY

1. This report provides PAC Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the Council's approach to responding to and preventing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in Hammersmith & Fulham.
2. This report covers the financial period of 2023-2025.
3. In the meeting we will be joined by representatives from Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse (STADA) and Advance Charity. STADA provide multiple coordination services for the council to support our strategic response. Advance charity is the lead provider in our core VAWG service in addition to providing co-located services in the borough.
4. Representing STADA will be Sally Jackson, Head of Service, and representatives for Advance will be Liz Mack, Chief Executive and Amy Glover, Director of Services for Domestic Abuse. As key partners they will speak through their services, the journeys of the victim/survivors they support, and answer any questions from PAC members.
5. The report is also supported by a visual aid to explain our approach to ending VAWG and the various structures and services responding to this issue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6. For the PAC to note and comment on the report and its contents.

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	The council's VAWG strategy contributes to the council's commitment to end violence against women and girls and make H&F a safe borough for residents. Commissioned support service providers are asked to deliver social value (where required) and to confirm that the staff involved in delivering the services will not be subject to zero-hour contracts, and will have suitable employment terms and conditions, including the payment of the London Living Wage.
Creating a compassionate council	The council's VAWG strategy and commissioned support services support some of the most disadvantaged residents in H&F and aim to improve the safety of residents affected by violence against women and girls (VAWG).
Doing things with local residents, not to them	The council's VAWG strategy was co-produced with H&F victims/survivors, residents, third sector providers, community organisations and various council departments including public health, housing and children's services.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	When commissioning VAWG services, the council follows a competitive procurement process to ensure all contracts represent good value for money.
Taking pride in H&F	The council's VAWG strategy contributes to the council's commitment to end violence against women and girls and make H&F a safe borough for residents.

Background

7. *'Stopping Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in all its different forms'*¹ is a H&F Labour manifesto commitment, and a priority for the Council.
8. In 2022, the Council published its first independent five-year strategy to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls.²

¹ [Putting all residents first](#)

² [Violence Against Women and Girls strategy 2022 to 2027 | London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham](#)

9. The Strategy was developed and co-produced with H&F victim/survivors, residents, third sector providers, community organisations, statutory services, and various council departments including Public Health, Housing, and Children's Services.
 10. The strategy has four main objectives:
 1. VAWG is prevented
 2. Survivors are supported
 3. Abusers are held to account
 4. Collaboration to create change
 11. Accompanying the strategy is a multi-agency 5-year action plan, reviewed annually, which details how we will be delivering against these shared objectives as a wider VAWG partnership.
 12. VAWG is a cross-cutting issue that effects multiple council departments including but not limited to Community Safety, Public Health, Children and Young People's services, Adult Safeguarding, Housing, Licensing, the Gang Violence and Exploitation team and the Law Enforcement Team. Equally our partners in the borough also play a vital role in responding to VAWG including Health and Education settings, Community services and local businesses
 13. Hammersmith & Fulham Council therefore take a Coordinated Community Response (CCR) approach to tackling VAWG.
 14. The CCR is based on the principle that keeping victim/survivors safe, holding perpetrators to account, and preventing further VAWG, is not the responsibility of one organisation, but is a shared responsibility that can only be achieved through a multi-agency approach.
 15. In 1997 H&F were the first borough in the UK to adopt the CCR. Many boroughs across the country have now adopted this model, nationally recognised as best practice.
 16. The CCR approach ensures a whole system response to a whole person. The [Government Tackling VAWG strategy 2021](#) highlights the need for "A 'whole system' approach with different professionals and agencies, local and national Government, charities, and others all working together to tackle VAWG".
 17. This report will provide an overview of the work of the VAWG team and wider VAWG partnership to deliver H&F's strategy to end Violence Against Women and Girls and our commitment to evidence-based best practice responses.
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DETAILED ANALYSIS

H&F VAWG Team Overview

18. As the demand for VAWG services continues to rise, over the last few years H&F's Community Safety Unit have successfully lobbied for, and secured,

additional resource (from internal growth and external grant funding) dedicated to delivering the VAWG Strategy.

19. Following recent budget planning meetings and investment made from the administration for 2025/26 the VAWG Team have successfully secured an additional £250,000pa of core Council funding to continue delivering our vital VAWG services.
20. This investment is very welcome and made at a time when Local Authorities face significant financial challenges in the face of rising delivery costs, increased cost of living, and financial pressures on the charity and public sectors. The Team is continuing to look for additional funding to maintain our current services and meet rising demand.
21. This report will provide an overview of these vital VAWG services, and will focus on H&F's:

- Coordination services
- Domestic Abuse Support Service (Angelou)
- Co-located Domestic Abuse Support Service
- Domestic Abuse Criminal Justice Service (Impact)
- Domestic Abuse Refuge (Safe Accommodation) Services
- Street Harassment Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)
- VAWG Prevention Work & Healthy Relationships with Young People
- Perpetrator Services
- Modern Slavery and Exploitation Services

Coordination services – delivering the CCR in H&F

22. H&F work closely in partnership with local Charity Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse (STADA) to deliver an effective CCR in our borough.
23. There are 12 key components that support the delivery of the CCR – see **Appendix A** for a visual aid to how we deliver the CCR in H&F.
24. In H&F we have a bold Ending VAWG strategy co-produced with survivors and a robust governance structure that supports delivery of the strategy.
25. We have a strong multi-agency partnership that delivers our response to VAWG. There is representation from all key agencies and specialist services at the H&F VAWG board and the operational groups that feed into this.
26. Survivor voice and an intersectional approach are central to everything we do, and we are committed to developing services that effectively meet the needs of a diverse community of survivors living and working in H&F.
27. STADA were pivotal in embedding the CCR in H&F and provide international training and consultancy on the CCR as subject matter experts. They deliver the following services on behalf of H&F:

28. **Coordination of the Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)** – 416 cases of high-risk domestic abuse were referred to the H&F MARAC in the financial year 2023-2024. This supports service delivery.
29. **Coordination of the H&F Specialist Domestic Abuse Court at Westminster Magistrates Court** – In 2023-2024 78% of defendants were subject to a pre-sentence report leading to more accurate and improved sentencing and a 75% conviction rate. This supports service delivery.
30. **Impact Performance and Review Coordinator** based at Charing cross police station – see 23. Domestic Abuse Criminal Justice service. This supports service delivery.
31. **Coordination of the Risk and Review Operational group** for the police Basic Command Unit area (H&F, RBKC and WCC) – this multi-agency operational group provides scrutiny and oversight of the criminal justice response and interventions to address high risk domestic abuse. This supports the H&F governance structure and service delivery.
32. **A part-time Harmful practices coordinator** who works across three boroughs to drive the strategic response to often over-looked victims of harmful practices including forced marriage, so-called “honour-based abuse”, female genital mutilation and conversion therapy. They coordinate the multi-agency Harmful Practices operational group. This supports the H&F governance structure and service delivery.
33. **Coordination of the Specialist services group** – a collective of local organisations working across VAWG – they provide vital insight into trends, gaps and challenges across the sector and provide feedback to the H&F VAWG board. This supports the H&F governance structure and service delivery.
34. Each of these projects collate qualitative and quantitative data to support informed decision making and develop and deliver bespoke multi-agency training.
35. In addition, STADA coordinate a Whole Housing Approach (WHA) service across three boroughs including H&F. H&F was a pilot site for the whole housing approach (WHA) from 2019 and contributed to the research and evaluation on this¹ The WHA is a framework that addresses the Housing and safety needs of victims of DA to reduce the number of victims made homeless because of DA.
36. Through the WHA service, funded via the Greater London Authority, they manage a flexible funding pot that H&F residents can access for additional support to prevent homelessness and an operational group of housing providers including housing associations.
37. One of the key elements of the WHA is Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation, the Mayor of London’s Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy outlines his proposal that all housing associations

and boroughs should have DAHA accreditation. H&F is in the process of becoming DAHA accredited by Autumn 2025. As part of this process, we have recruited a full time DA Housing coordinator and undertaken several activities to meet DAHA standards.

38. STADA also manage the H&F Sanctuary scheme to DAHA standards, providing security solutions to keep domestic abuse survivors and their children safe in their own home.

Domestic Abuse Support Service (Angelou)

39. H&F's main Domestic Abuse support service is provided by the Angelou Service. The Angelou Service is delivered by a consortium of VAWG organisations including:
40. [Advance](#) (lead partner)
41. [Al Hasaniya](#) (specialists in Black and global majority communities and harmful practices)
42. [Women and Girls Network](#) (specialists in sexual violence)
43. [Solace](#) (specialists in sexual violence)
44. [IKWRO Women's Rights Organisation](#) (specialists in Black and global majority communities and harmful practices)
45. [Galop](#) (LGBT+ communities)
46. Together the Angelou Service supports women and girls aged 13+ (including trans women) and gender non-binary people who are:
- Experiencing domestic abuse and sexual violence and assault including sexual exploitation and gang related assault.
 - Experiencing stalking and harassment as part of domestic abuse.
 - Who have been subjected to or at risk of harmful practices including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage (FM), and so- called "honour-based" abuse (HBA)
 - Experiencing multiple forms of VAWG

Our casework:

47. In 2023/24, Angelou supported 724 victim/survivors in H&F. 254 children were indirectly supported as a result of supporting their non-abusive parent.
48. **Outcomes:** 100% of survivors reported a reduction in risk and increased feelings of safety after working with Angelou. 100% of women reported improved confidence in reporting abuse and where to access help and support and 98% of women reported a reduction in social isolation and increased access to social networks.

49. **Emerging needs:** 529 women and girls self-reported a mental health need. VAWG understandably has a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of victim/survivors. A recent consultation with Angelou service users highlighted the need for long term support and counselling to promote recovery and reduce revictimization. The team are continuing to look for funding opportunities to enhance the support we provide through Angelou to address these needs around mental health and wellbeing.
50. **Highlights:** In 2024-2025 we provided £9,500 funding to Woman's Trust to deliver vital counselling services and support to women affected by VAWG.
51. The next section explores additional commissioned services, outside of the Angelou Partnership, which support victims of VAWG:

Co-Located Domestic Abuse Support Service

52. In addition to the Angelou service, H&F also commission a co-located Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) Service which embeds IDVAs directly into the following services: Housing, Children's Social Care, and the Criminal Justice Service.
53. Co-Located IDVAs offer enhanced support to victim/survivors accessing the above services in H&F, in recognition of the additional barriers and challenges often faced by victim/survivors when navigating these services. The IDVAs also provide specialist training and consultations to professionals working across these sectors, to reduce structural and systemic barriers and improve overall quality of support.
54. In 2024/25 to date³, the co-located IDVA service has supported 131 victim/survivors in H&F.
55. **Outcomes:** In 2024/25 to date, the co-located IDVA service has provided 154 consultations to professionals and delivered six bespoke training sessions to 88 professionals within Housing, Children's Social Care, and the Criminal Justice System in H&F. Professionals who attended the sessions have reported feeling increased confidence in supporting victim/survivors of domestic abuse.

Domestic Abuse Criminal Justice Service (Impact)

56. The Impact Project is designed to improve outcomes and experiences for victim/survivors of DA in the criminal justice system and ensure effective justice outcomes for perpetrators.
57. Impact supports victim survivors through:
58. A co-located Criminal Justice IDVA (from the co-located IDVA service contract)
59. A Specialist Domestic Abuse Court (SDAC – from the coordination contracts)

³ This excludes Q4 as it was not complete at the time of writing this report

60. A Performance & Review Coordinator who tracks cases through the CJS (from the coordination contracts)
61. DA-trained police officers in the Safeguarding Unit
62. The partnership includes H&F Council, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), National Probation Service (NPS), HM Court Service, ADVANCE, and Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse (STADA).
63. In 2023/24, the Impact CJ IDVA supported 104 victim/survivors through the criminal justice system in H&F.
64. **Outcomes:** Last year, 100% of victim/survivors who engaged with the CJ IDVA reported that following their experience with the Impact Project, they would report further incidents to the police, would go to court again, and reported feeling safer and at reduced risk of harm.
65. **Challenges:** Due to changes in how the Met Police allow partners access to their systems our providers face a new challenge regarding timely information sharing that can reduce risk to victim/survivors. This is not “just” a H&F issue but a London wide, and national one. We have been, and continue to, lobby for this issue to be rectified.
66. **Highlight:** The H&F SDAC at Westminster magistrates court is the only nationally recognised best practice model in the country.

Domestic Abuse Refuge (Safe Accommodation) Services

67. H&F commission three DA refuge services which operate across four buildings in the borough. Two of the services are specialist refuges, offering the only support of their kind available in the entire country.
68. The services provide 31 supported accommodation bed spaces to adults who have had to flee their homes because of domestic abuse. One of the services can also accommodate up to 15 children who have fled their homes with their mothers.
69. The Refuge services are one part of H&F’s response to supporting victim/survivors of DA to access safe accommodation. The team work closely with our Housing department to ensure we are delivering best practice in line

with our duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. As part of this, H&F are currently working towards achieving DAHA accreditation.

70. **Key Figures:** In 2023/4 our refuges supported 130 victim/survivors by providing them with safe accommodation and support.
71. **Challenges faced:** Unfortunately, the demand for refuge bed spaces is higher than the supply (in one of our specialist refuges, we receive approximately eight applicants every time one bed space becomes available). This is a national issue.
72. **Highlights:** In 2023, we risked losing both of our specialist refuge services because the landlord decided to sell the buildings. We presented a successful business case to purchase the buildings, worked with the Development Team to negotiate a deal which meant we got the buildings for half of the asking price, and were able to safeguard the services.
73. Now, as landlord of the buildings and commissioners of the services, we have greater control over the quality of the accommodation offered to victim/survivors, in line with our DAHA accreditation commitments.
74. **Highlights:** This year, the VAWG Team have been able to secure funding to provide culturally appropriate therapeutic support to the women living in H&F refuges, available in 5 different languages.

Street Harassment Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)

75. Following feedback from residents, H&F introduced a public spaces protection order (PSPO) prohibiting street harassment across the whole borough.
76. This new PSPO was designed to reduce incidents of antisocial behaviour and improve the safety for all those who work, live or visit the borough - particularly women and girls who are disproportionately impacted by sexual harassment and stalking in public spaces.
77. **Highlight:** H&F was the first Local Authority to implement a borough-wide Street Harassment PSPO in the UK, with other boroughs now following our example of best practice.

VAWG Prevention Work and Healthy Relationships with Young People

78. In 2024, the VAWG Team collaborated with the Youth Council and Children's Services to co-produce and launch a new podcast series called Let's Talk About It. The series engages in conversation with key VAWG service providers and covers a variety of topics including healthy relationships, sexual harassment, masculinity, and sexual health.
79. **Highlight:** The podcast series was co-produced by and for young people and is available on [Soundcloud](#).

Perpetrator Services

80. H&F commission and work in partnership with a variety of services which aim to hold perpetrators of VAWG to account these include the Impact project, and the Specialist Domestic Abuse courts outlined above. We recognise there are multiple ways to hold abusers to account for their behaviour beyond the criminal justice system and we provide opportunities for behaviour change to break the cycle of abuse.
81. **Safe & Together:** H&F have adopted the Safe & Together model in children's services with a coordinator who provides extensive training for social workers and other professionals. The model encourages social workers to partner with the non-abusive parent to keep the child safe and together with that parent whilst holding the abuser accountable for their behaviour and action or inaction as a parent.
82. **Culturally Integrated Family Approach - CIFA:** H&F are part of a consortium of boroughs who have commissioned RISE to deliver CIFA (Culturally Integrated Family Approach). CIFA is an intersectional family and community approach to tackling domestic abuse in 10 boroughs, focusing on integrated victim safety support, 1:1 perpetrator delivery, adult to parent familial domestic abuse intervention, LGBT+ delivery and outreach work. It is a culturally informed service available in 20 languages funded through the Home Office Domestic Abuse Perpetrator fund.
83. **Drive:** In 2023, Drive was rolled out across London and began delivery in H&F. Drive, also funded through the Home Office Domestic Abuse Perpetrator fund, works with high harm perpetrators to reduce abuse and increase victim/survivor safety. It is delivered in partnership with Respect, SafeLives, RISE and Social Finance in collaboration with PCCs, local authorities, and service providers. Drive focuses on supporting the needs of the perpetrator to effect behaviour change which leads to a long-term reduction in VAWG. The service also uses disruption as a tool, putting barriers and obstacles in place to prevent abuse, including working with the criminal justice system and local agencies. H&F have a police-led Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Panel (DAPP) to oversee high risk perpetrators including those suitable for drive.

Modern Slavery and Exploitation (MSE)

84. H&F has a dedicated strategy to tackle Modern Slavery and Exploitation. Our work to end MSE is linked to our VAWG workstreams where there is overlap in areas of exploitation that disproportionately affect women and girls such as

sexual exploitation (sex industry), forced marriage, and certain types of forced labour such as domestic servitude.

85. **Sex Industry:** H&F works closely with the other local authorities in our police BCU (RBKC and WCC) to identify and minimise risk of exploitation and harm in the sex industry.
86. In 2022 we established a Sex Industry Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and in 2023 we commissioned a scoping exercise to get a better understanding of the sex industry in H&F.
87. As a result of this work, in 2025 we are commissioning a new outreach support service specifically for Brazilians within the sex industry to improve their access to health services and support.
88. **MSE Licensing visits:** Licensing teams are trained to spot the signs of MSE and there are SPOCs in each regulatory services team. We have worked with licensing to ensure that displaying Stop the Traffic (STT) information posters is a condition of special treatment licenses.
89. The VAWG Team conduct joint licensing visits to pubs and venues with the Ask for Angela scheme to perform spot checks and provide information on harassment and drink spiking. The VAWG Team also go on outreach visits with the licensing team to an adult entertainment club in the borough to check in on the wellbeing of the employees.

Next Steps and Priorities for 2025/26

90. Unfortunately, across the nation as well as locally, providing VAWG services is more urgent than ever. VAWG and misogyny continue to be prominent features in society, and the prevalence of social media makes this an ever-evolving problem, particularly for young people today.
91. As the VAWG Team continue to deliver against H&F's VAWG Strategy, there are a few aims and ambitions we wish to highlight:
92. Improve and increase our engagement with young people, schools, and other non-educational settings for those not in education or employment
93. Strengthen our relationship with the police to align our approaches to ending VAWG both strategically and operationally
94. Continue to improve opportunities for engagement with victim/survivors and local communities so that they remain at the heart of what we do

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A – the Coordinated community response in H&F – a visual aid.

ⁱ [Whole+Housing+Approach+Y1+Report.pdf](#)

An illustration of a diverse group of people walking together from left to right. The group includes a woman with a white cane, a person in a wheelchair, a pregnant woman, and individuals of various ethnicities and ages. The background is a light blue gradient with stylized white lines suggesting movement or sound waves. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

Ending Violence Against Women & Girls

The Coordinated Community Response in H&F

Annabel Moores

Our approach – the Coordinated Community Response

We recognise that real change in responding to and ending VAWG can only be achieved when all agencies, residents, and communities work effectively together.

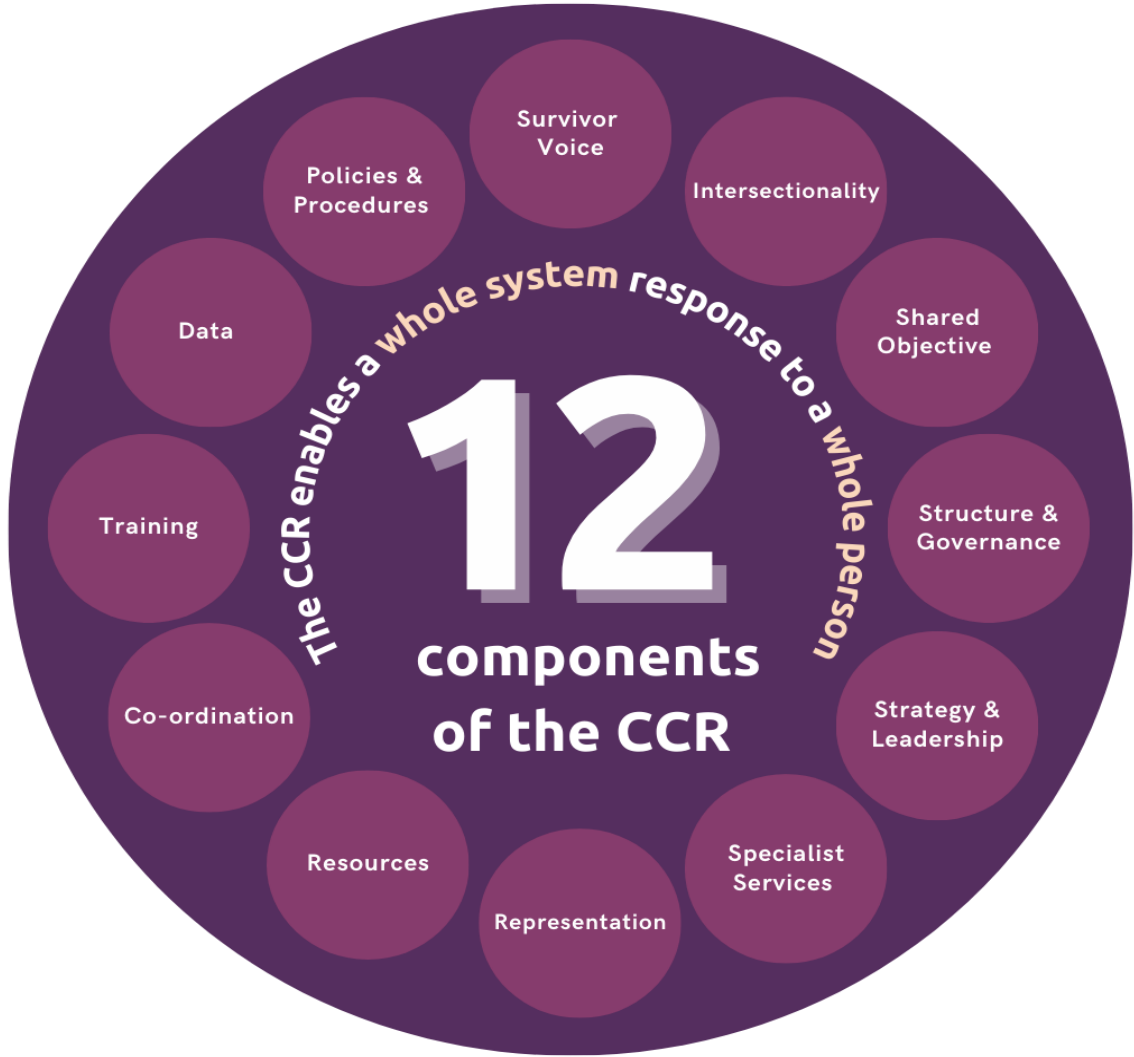
Ensuring everyone knows the role they play in responding to VAWG and how they work with each other is a process known as the Coordinated Community Response (CCR).

In 1997 H&F was the first borough in the UK to adopt the CCR. The CCR is championed nationally as a best practice example of a “whole system” response to a whole person. A whole system response has been adopted by the Government’s Tackling VAWG strategy 2021.

Local charity Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse are the VAWG sector experts on delivering the CCR, they provide international training on the model.

There are 12 components to the CCR – this visual aid demonstrates how we have embedded key components within our response to effectively implement the CCR in H&F.





Ending VAWG Strategy

Co-produced alongside Residents, Survivors and Key Stakeholders
Written with Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse

Survivor Voice

VAWG is prevented
Survivors are supported
Abusers are held to account
Collaboration to create change/Partnership working

Shared Objectives

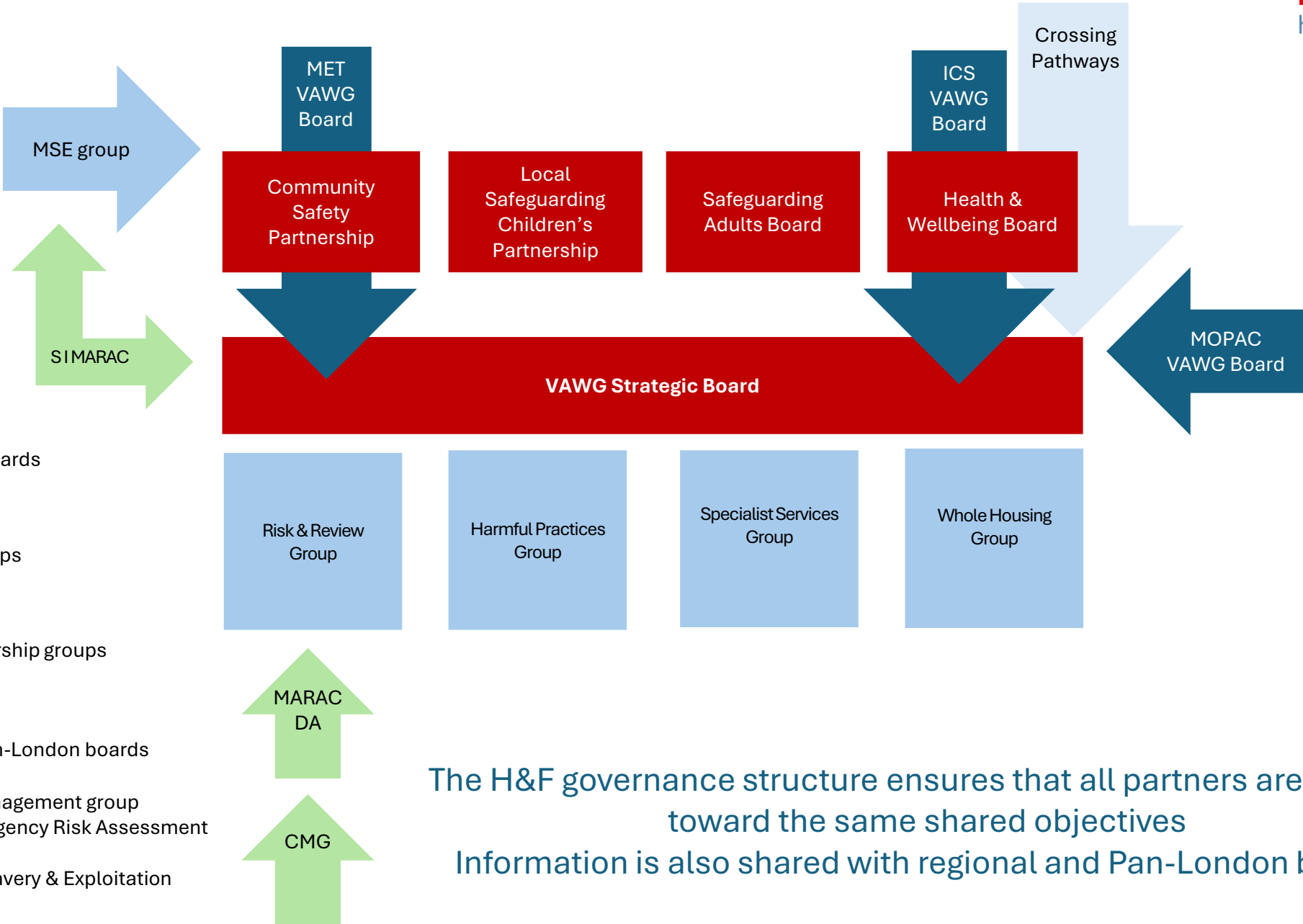
Our Approach

The Coordinated Community Response (CCR)
The Ecological Model
Evidence- based
Local data



The H&F strategy centres survivor voice and outlines the shared objectives across the H&F partnership

Governance Structure



The H&F governance structure ensures that all partners are working toward the same shared objectives
Information is also shared with regional and Pan-London boards

VAWG Board Membership

Co-chaired by the Operational Director Children and Young Peoples Service
and Detective Chief Inspector MET police



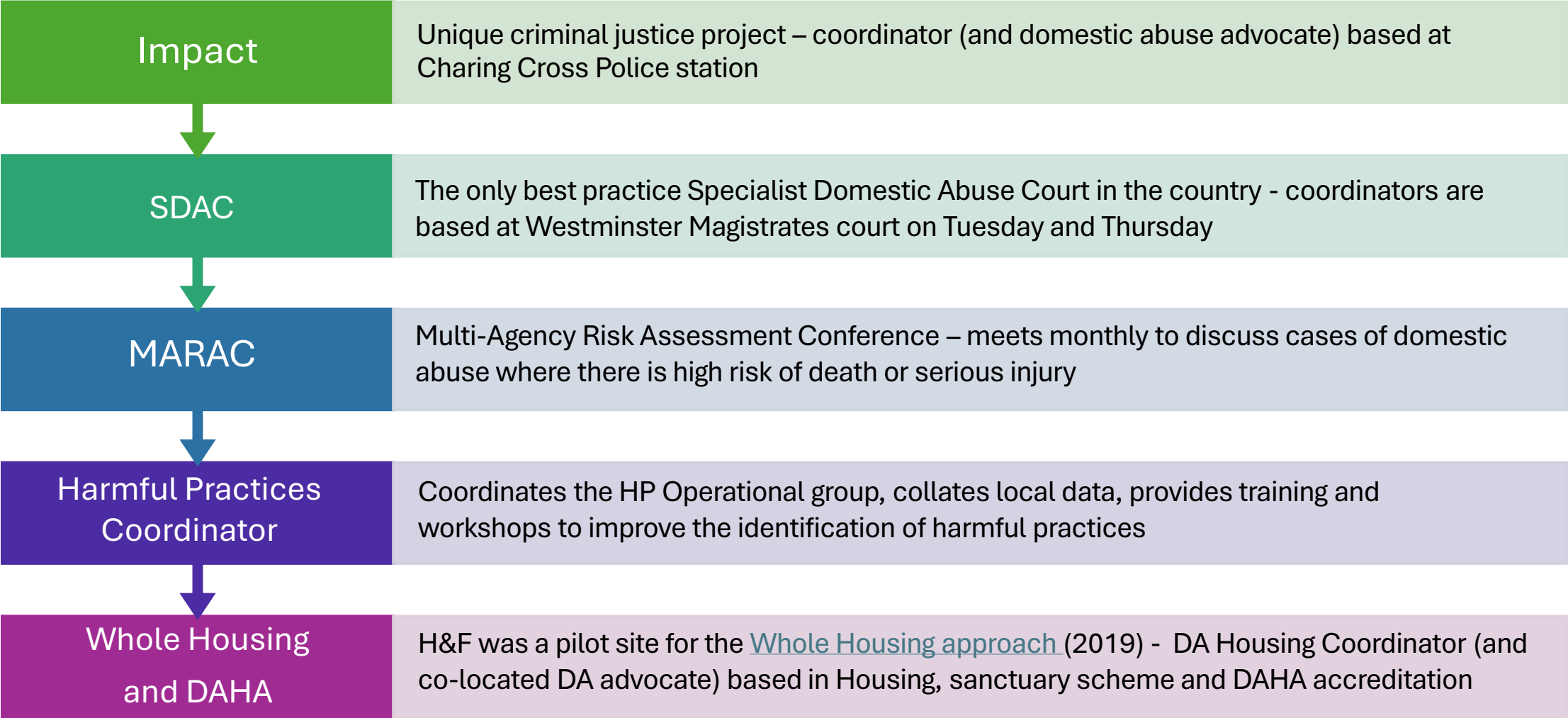
H&F VAWG board and the operational groups have representation from all key stakeholders and specialist services

Specialist providers



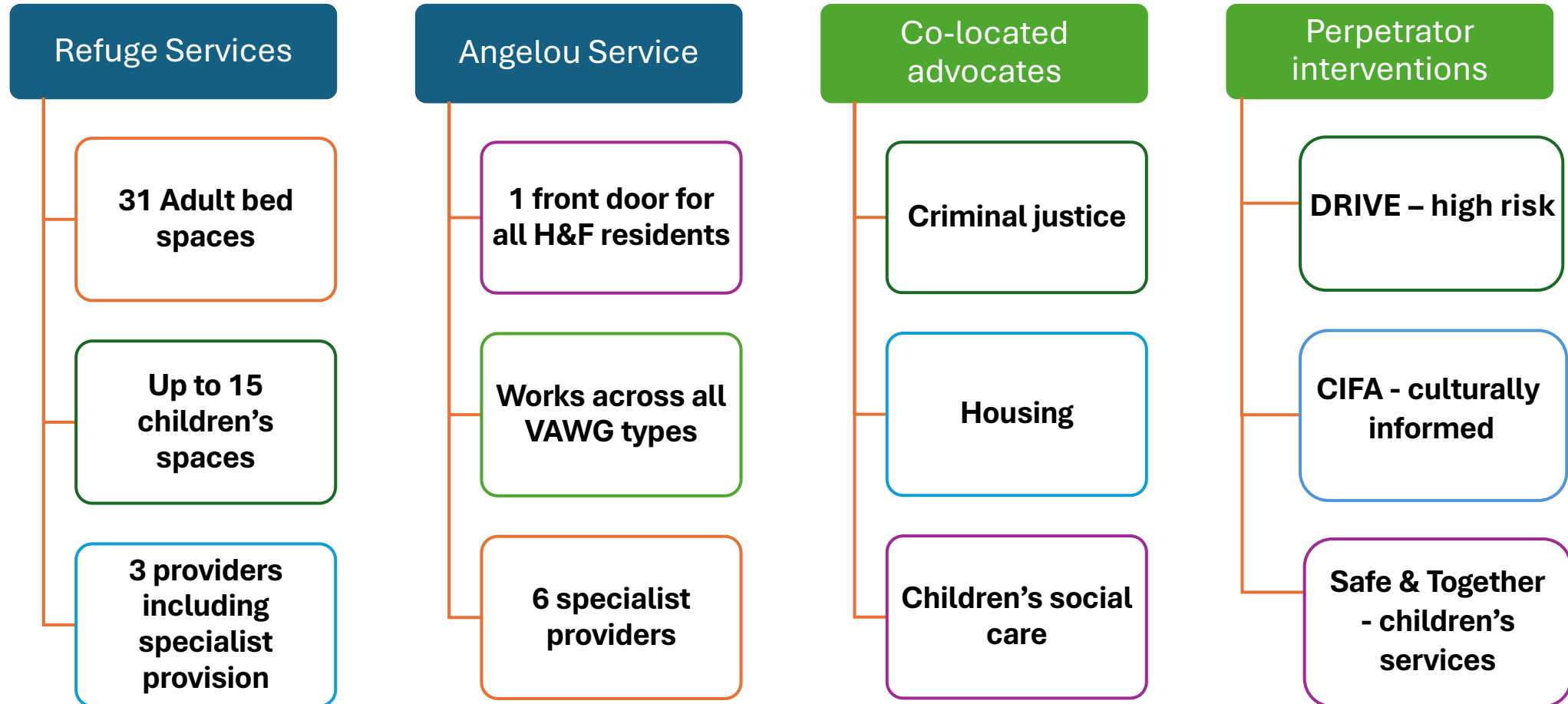


Coordination Services



These coordination services support the H&F partnership to effectively deliver the CCR, enhancing service delivery

Support Services



We need dedicated resources and a variety of services to support survivors, reduce risk and hold abusers to account

Report to: Social Inclusion & Community Safety Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 30/04/2025

Subject: Gangs, Violence & Exploitation Unit (GVEU)

Report author: Gemma Lightfoot, GVEU Manager & Corinne Baker, GVEU Policy & Service Development Assistant

Responsible Director: Mark Raisbeck, Director of Public Realm

SUMMARY

This report is written to provide an update on the work of the Gangs, Violence & Exploitation Unit for financial year 2024/25 alongside sharing information on upcoming projects for the 2025/26 financial year.

There are no decisions required from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For the Committee to note and comment on the report.

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Corporate Plan and the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	The GVEU is providing young residents with professional and vocational skills to contribute to the borough's economy, ensuring young people in the borough have the best start in life.
Creating a compassionate and inclusive council	The GVEU supports young people at risk of gang activity, violence and exploitation and their families to live long, healthy fulfilling lives through early intervention and prevention.

Doing things with local residents, not to them	The GVEU has co-produced and co-delivered projects for young people with parents, carers, young people and voluntary/community sector (VCS) partners to understand and address the needs and requirements of diverse communities.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	The GVEU delivers a financially efficient service and has successfully bid for significant funding from external sources.
Taking pride in H&F	As part of the Community Safety Partnership, the GVEU works to make H&F a safe borough for everyone through preventing youth and gang violence and exploitation. We facilitate community programmes and cultural activities for young people with partners, including local theatres and VCS partners whom we fund to deliver co-produced projects.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	The GVEU has worked closely with the Climate Change team by linking them in with the communities we work with to further raise their profile and aims.

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

Introduction

1. Following the inception of the Gangs, Violence & Exploitation Unit (GVEU) in 2020, the GVEU team has continued to expand to meet the needs of young people, and their families, in the borough.
2. The team is managed by the GVEU Unit Manager and consists of various staff posts including four Council-funded Metropolitan Police officers.
3. As of March 2025, the Unit has supported 155 young people during the four years' of the GVEU's service through our outreach workers, who provide each young person with support and assistance in engaging in a variety of important interventions with a focus on early intervention and preventative measures in relation to gangs, violence and exploitation. GVEU Outreach Workers each

exceptionally support caseloads of, on average, 10-12 young people simultaneously. Due to the nature of the GVEU's cohort, our Outreach Workers provide high level systemic and trauma informed practice to meet the complex needs of young people.

4. Since the inception of the GVEU, our work and reputation has grown significantly within the borough, across the BCU and regionally. Our work is now significantly recognised by London's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), which is part of the Mayor of London Office for Policing & Crime, as being one of best practice with unique projects that recognise the needs and aspirations of our communities. Due to this, the VRU requested that we spoke at their London wide conference regarding our project offers which generated interest from across London.
5. The VRU has, and continues, to provide additional funding to the service which allows us to commission further bespoke services for our young people as explained further below.
6. In line with our commitment to centring the voices of young people and our communities, the GVEU has invited Said Mohamud, Chief Executive Officer of Minaret Community Centre and Dominique Alexander, Ambassador of the GVEU's Young Person's Action Group (YPAG) to attend April's Social Inclusion & Community Safety PAC to share their experiences of delivering or benefitting from GVEU-funded services.

Violence Reduction Unit – 'My Ends' Project

7. The GVEU successfully bid for, and secured, £280,000 from the VRU to deliver their 'My Ends' programme, through community-led initiatives in hyper-local areas to tackle violence, including diversionary projects for young people and their families in H&F. This includes support networks for parents and carers, as well as sport, music, arts and drama activities for young people.
8. Funding from the VRU is allocated to intervention work in specific areas of the borough based on identified needs. The GVEU collaborates with the police, external partners, and residents to understand and map issues related to gang activity, violence, and exploitation, which informs the strategic placement of projects. Alongside listening to our statutory and community partners, the GVEU carried out detailed analysis of crime and deprivation data to inform our decisions.
9. Previously, this funding (previously 'Community Capacity Building' grants) has focused on other hyper-local areas in South Fulham and White City Estate.

Work Delivered 2024/25

'My Ends' Funding 2024/25

10. The 'My Ends' funding for the 2024/25 financial year was allocated to communities in the wider West Kensington area (including Burne Jones House, Samuel Richardson House, Southern Housing Estate, West Kensington Estate and Lillie Road Peabody Estate). The GVEU, alongside partners, decided to

focus on the West Kensington area due to it being disproportionately affected by youth violence over a number of years (an increase of 12% in the West Kensington Estate and 9% in the Lillie Road Peabody Estate)¹. We also noted levels of deprivation across the above areas, which fall into the second and fourth lowest deciles in the borough in terms of deprivation².

11. The funding has delivered the following projects which were decided through our regular My Ends Partnership meetings;

Minaret Parent & Carer Project and Youth Project - in attendance at April's Social Inclusion & Community Safety PAC

12. In line with our commitment to community-led initiatives, the GVEU has established a strong partnership with the [Minaret Community Centre](#), a culturally focused hub in Fulham that serves the Somali and broader East/North African communities in the borough. This is in recognition that within the West Kensington area, the Somali community has been disproportionately affected by youth violence.
13. Through this collaboration, the GVEU has funded a year's worth of weekly Parent & Carer sessions (please see **Appendix A** for images) to be delivered by Minaret Community Centre to address the increasing stress and challenges faced by parents in and around the wider West Kensington area. These sessions raise awareness about identifying signs of gang involvement, violence, and exploitation among young people, and provide access to support services. We have also funded Minaret to deliver 12 months of weekly sessions to young people in West Kensington, equipping them with the knowledge to recognise and avoid gang involvement, violence, and exploitation (please see **Appendix B** for images). The positive impact of this partnership has been acknowledged by local online press platform [Fulham SW6](#).
14. Said Mohamud, Chief Executive Officer of Minaret Community Centre, will be attending April's Social Inclusion & Community Safety PAC to elaborate on this partnership and share testimonials from young people, parents, and carers who have participated in these projects.

Rebel Records

15. The GVEU's partnerships with local communities can also be seen through our longstanding project with [Rebel Records](#), an independent recording studio and label based in Fulham.
16. The project was initiated based on feedback received from parents and carers of young people in the borough who highlighted their young people's interest in drill music production. Rather than dismissing this, we recognised its potential and harnessed it to achieve positive outcomes. The project highlights the importance of dedication, focus, and avoiding negative influences through

¹ Rostek, B, LBHF BI Service 'Burne Jones House, Samuel Richardson House, Southern Housing Estate, West Kensington Estate and Lillie Road Peabody Analysis'

² Rostek, B, LBHF BI Service 'Burne Jones House, Samuel Richardson House, Southern Housing Estate, West Kensington Estate and Lillie Road Peabody Analysis'

music creation, giving young people access to the Rebel Records studio to learn music production, writing skills, and the basics of the music industry.

Motor Vehicle Training Programme with the Harrow Club

17. As part of the 'My Ends' Grant 24/25, the GVEU is collaborating with local youth club, [The Harrow Club](#), to deliver a motor-vehicle training programme designed to attract young people who have engaged in or are at risk of engaging in the theft of bikes or other vehicles. By engaging local young people in legal, safe and fun vehicle-related activities, the GVEU hopes to increase participants' connection with the community and skill levels whilst reducing crime.

Residential with the Harrow Club

18. Similarly, the GVEU and the Harrow Club are collaborating to provide an opportunity for young people to leave London and spend a week in a rural location engaging in 'Debate Boxing', encouraging young people to express themselves through reasoned debate rather than arguing and regulated boxing rather than fighting. As such, benefitting participants' physical and emotional wellbeing and equipping them with skills such as teamwork, planning, public speaking and boxing techniques.

Upcoming Work for 2025/26

'My Ends' Funding 2025/26

19. The 'My Ends' funding for 2025/26 has been allocated to interventions in and around the Clem Attlee Estate.
20. The GVEU and partners identified the absence of local positive activities for young people in the heart of the Clem Attlee Estate and have therefore proposed several of the projects to be delivered from the Clem Attlee Community Hall.
21. As with the West Kensington Area, the GVEU allocated the 2025/26 'My Ends' funding to the Clem Attlee Estate Area following consultation with partners and data analysis. The Clem Attlee Estate is one of the most deprived areas in the borough³. Thus, the GVEU recognises the need for positive diversionary intervention for young people in and around the Clem Attlee Estate Area.

Street Dance and Boxing Sessions

22. We recognise the importance of physical activity for young people and will be delivering street dance sessions and boxing sessions to young people in the Clem Attlee Community Hall, contributing to their physical and emotional wellbeing and promoting community cohesion among young people in and around the Clem Attlee Estate.
23. During these sessions, the GVEU Community Development Outreach Worker will deliver sessions for participants raising awareness of gang activity, violence and exploitation and how to access support. The GVEU has also funded Street

³ Rostek, B, LBHF BI Service 'Clem Attlee Estate'

Dance classes at the Queen Caroline Community which have received high engagement and positive feedback from residents, with a parent of a Street Dance class attendee sharing: *“Thank you very much for setting up these sessions. It's great for the local children to have somewhere safe to enjoy themselves and take part in a constructive task, where their confidence and community spirit can grow!”*.

‘Grillz’ Course

24. Following an innovative idea made by a young person to introduce a ‘Grillz’ making workshop, the GVEU are delivering a dental jewellery production course to young people aged 16-21.
25. Over the two-day weekend course, participants will be taught how to make their own custom Grill by a fully qualified dental technician. Alongside providing participants with technical skills, the project will highlight the importance of focus, concentration and dedication with their custom Grill to take home symbolising the result of harnessing the above skills.

Rebel Records Continuation

26. Following several successful phases of Rebel Records as part of the 2024/25 ‘My Ends’ spend as detailed above, the GVEU will continue to deliver the project as part of the 2025/26 spend, targeting young people from the Clem Attlee Estate.

DJing Course with Rebel Records

27. Acknowledging the success of the Rebel Records project and recognising young people’s interest in music production, the GVEU are funding Rebel Records to deliver a DJing programme to young people, aged 13-17, from the Clem Attlee Estate.
28. As one of the closest youth clubs to the Estate, we will be working with The Brunswick Club to engage young people from in and around Clem Attlee. The project will be based on a mobile DJ setup that will attend youth clubs, youth events and venues to teach young people how to DJ. The course will be able to work with individuals on a 1 on 1 basis, or groups of up to 6. Participants will be shown how the equipment works, the basics of beat matching, beat counting, mix transitions and EQ and FX features. As such, the project will be a creative outlet for young people.

Shakespearian Theatre Programme with Intermission Youth

29. The GVEU wants to create spaces for young people at risk of gang involvement, violence or exploitation to express themselves through creative outlets. Therefore, we are collaborating with [Intermission Youth](#), a charity who use Shakespeare to reflect young people's lives, to deliver a theatre programme for young people at the Clem Attlee Estate Community Hall. The project will foster self-expression, teamwork, confidence, motivation, self-esteem, creativity, and literacy in participants.

Monologues from the Manor

30. Similarly, during 'Monologues from the Manor', a programme to be delivered to young people during the summer holidays, participants will learn how to produce a range of monologues to be performed and recorded for film and/or theatre and intended for showcase. The project will encourage participants to express their collective feelings and attitudes towards social issues and growing up in the combined area. It will give young people an understanding of various aspects of creative practices in music and theatre.

Glow & Grow Beauty Course

31. The GVEU are committed to providing safe spaces for young women and girls at risk of violence and exploitation, in line with the Council's commitment to tackling Violence Against Women & Girls.
32. We have listened to young women and girls who have expressed their interest in the beauty industry and introduced the 'Glow & Grow' project, in collaboration with local youth organisations [West Youth Zone](#) and The Harrow Club. Through this programme we delivered a 5-week makeup course to a cohort of ten girls, followed by an accredited individual lash extension course and an accredited nail extension course (please see **Appendix C** for images).
33. One participant shared: *"I will use these skills for the rest of my life. With the lash extension and acrylic nails accreditation, I could turn this into a career!"*. Following a successful delivery of Glow & Grow to the first cohort of participants, the GVEU will be tailoring it to the needs of communities in and around the Clem Attlee Estate for the 2025/26 My Ends spend.

Mentoring Programme for Young Women and Girls with Kairo's Girls

34. In line with the need to address the impact of gang activity, violence and exploitation on young women and girls, the GVEU will be funding Kairo's Girls, a mentoring service & safe space for vulnerable girls who are at risk due to their age, gender and socioeconomic disadvantage, to deliver a programme of workshops exploring various societal issues including gangs, exploitation, healthy relationships and social media to girls aged 11-17 from in and around the Clem Attlee Estate.

Barbering Course

35. The GVEU recognise the importance of vocational skills. Therefore, we are delivering a barbering course to equip young people with the skills needed should they wish to pursue a career in barbering. Participants will be taught about building a career in barbering, how to perform basic haircuts, skin fades, and various styles to expand their portfolio.

eBook

36. As outlined, the GVEU delivers a variety of projects that provide young people with vocational, entrepreneurial and professional skills. We want to ensure that project participants have long-term access to resources, ensuring the outputs of

projects are sustainable. We are therefore designing a digital eBook on building and marketing a personal brand to be of access for all young people on GVEU projects. The eBook will be a resource open to every young person that engages with GVEU projects and will be accessible through a QR code to be downloaded to devices for further reference.

Parent & Carer Sessions with Funpact

37. To continue raising awareness on gang activity, violence and exploitation amongst parents and carers in the borough, the GVEU will be collaborating with parent-led charity, [Funpact](#), to introduce innovative way for parents and carers to communicate and interact with their young people. We will draw on information and insight given in the previous Parent and Carers meetings delivered across the borough to steer how these sessions are facilitated. Funpact have previously delivered, via our funding, a similar successful project on White City Estate.

Ongoing Work

School Engagement

38. The Unit's Community Development Outreach Worker has led on the GVEU's engagement with local schools, including Special Educational Needs schools and Pupil Referral Units, delivering engaging workshops to raise awareness of gang activity, violence and exploitation and promote the work of the GVEU to young people across the borough.
39. The success of these sessions has been evidenced by the positive feedback received from schools following on from workshops. Brackenbury Primary School praised the workshop, sharing that that the children *'responded positively to the session and through further discussion in class the children spoke confidently about what they had learnt and said they enjoyed the session'*.
40. Parayhouse Special Educational Needs School expressed their appreciation for a session an Outreach Worker and our Community Development Outreach Worker delivered, stating *'it was great to see the consideration you put into adapting the presentation with prompts and role plays so that the young people received the clear messages around positive and negative relationships and how these can lead to coercion and exploitation'*.

Lyric Theatre Partnership

41. The GVEU are funding the [Lyric Hammersmith Theatre](#) to deliver a touring production raising awareness of county lines exploitation for children in Year 6 and Year 7 across schools, youth clubs and pupil referral units across the borough in June 2025.
42. We consulted with young people in schools, PRUs and youth clubs and the police and local partners to understand how county lines exploitation has impacted the borough and how we can best engage children through the production (please see **Appendix D** for images). Our strong relationship with schools in the borough has aided our ability to promote the production to local schools.

Notting Hill Carnival

43. Since the inception of the GVEU, we have continued to deliver interventions for young people during Notting Hill Carnival weekend. In preparation for the August Bank Holiday weekend, the GVEU works in partnership with Children's Services, the Voluntary & Community Sector, the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster City Council. Annually, the partnership produces safety planning guidance for young people, delivers additional youth club sessions across the weekend and facilitates conversations with young people's lead practitioners on whether a young person is attending Notting Hill Carnival and any enforcement conditions they must follow, alongside conversations with parents/carers where possible.

Young Persons' Action Group (YPAG) – in attendance at April's Social Inclusion & Community Safety PAC

44. As evidenced, addressing the interests and needs of our young people is of the upmost importance to the GVEU. The 'Grillz' project recommendation was made by a young person at one of the GVEU Young Persons' Action Group (YPAG) sessions.
45. The GVEU drew inspiration from the successful practices of the VRU's YPAG and presented the initiative to some of our young people, who responded positively. The GVEU facilitates monthly YPAG sessions with young people who are either open to the GVEU, have been open to us in the past, or who have taken part in our projects. This has enabled us to gain a fruitful understanding of the needs and interests of young people, to inform our service delivery and co-production.
46. The GVEU are proud to introduce Dominique Alexander, a member of our YPAG who was previously supported by a GVEU Outreach Worker, will be attending April's Social Inclusion & Community Safety PAC to share the impact that the GVEU has had on her life. Dominique will be sharing:
- The benefits of having long-term support from an outreach worker
 - Her experience on the GVEU's Rebel Records Project
 - Her experience as an Ambassador on our newly-formed YPAG

Conclusion

47. In line with our KPIs, over the last 12 months the GVEU has continued to build relationships across the Council, NHS, Police, schools and the VCS, having engaged with over 850 residents through schools and community organisations through our Community Development Outreach Worker. We also fund detached outreach, enabling partner organisations to deliver weekly outreach sessions with young people, tasked to areas of concern on a fortnightly basis; through this detached outreach the GVEU has supported 471 young people over the last 12 months.
48. Police Constable, Laura Searle, from the Proactive Offender Management Unit in central and west London, said, "*The Gangs Unit has become an irreplaceable*

partner in our work. Their approach to building trust within our communities helps prevent crime and saves lives."

49. We are pleased to announce that we have successfully secured an additional £300,000 of funding from the VRU for 2025-2028 and are actively exploring further innovative ideas on how to utilise this. We look forward to continuing to support young people, families and communities over the coming 12 months.

LIST OF APPENDCIES

Appendix A – Minaret Parents & Carers Project
Appendix B – Minaret Young People's Project
Appendix C - Glow & Grow Project
Appendix D – Lyric Theatre, Cross the Lines Consultation

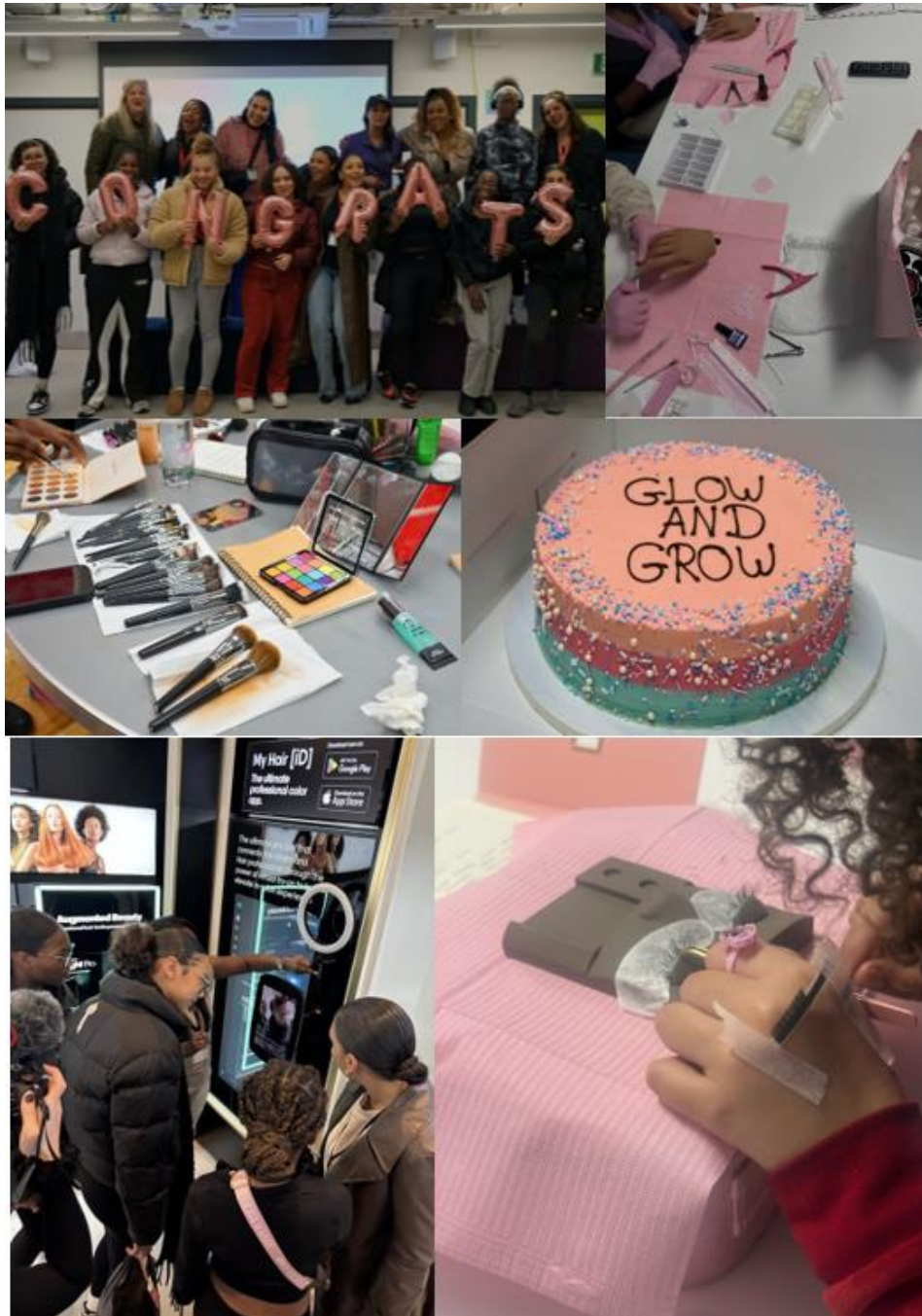
Appendix A – Minaret Parents & Carers Project



Appendix B – Minaret Young People's Project



Appendix C - Glow & Grow Project



Appendix D – Lyric Theatre, Cross the Lines Consultation

