

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 07/03/2022

Subject: Ending Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy 2022 - 2027

Report of: Councillor Sue Fennimore, Deputy Leader

Report author: Annabel Moores, Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Lead

Responsible Director: Sharon Lea, Strategic Director of Environment

SUMMARY

The Ending Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy has been co-produced by partners across the borough, including survivors, residents, businesses, and multi-agency professionals.

It outlines our Coordinated Community Response (CCR) to ending Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) which states that it is everyone's business to work together to end these crimes. It sets out our four objectives to ending VAWG, which are: VAWG is prevented, survivors are supported, abusers are held to account and collaboration to create change.

It outlines how we can all play our part in ending VAWG, as individuals, communities, professionals and as a society. H&F will also co-produce a five-year action plan setting out how the council will achieve its objectives; this will be developed alongside partners and survivors in early 2022 for publication later in the year.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Cabinet approves the contents and publication of Hammersmith & Fulham's Ending Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy 2022 - 2027.
-

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Creating a compassionate council	The strategy seeks to deliver an approach which is collaborative, coordinated, trauma-informed, intersectional, gender-informed, and

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
	above all puts survivor voices and specialist services at its heart. It promotes gender equality and the human rights of all individuals irrelevant of gender, race, religion, sexuality, or disability.
Doing things with residents, not to them	The strategy is co-produced, which includes collaborative work with, residents, representatives from the community, as well as from local businesses and professionals across the borough.

Financial Impact

The strategy was compiled and developed by the Community Safety Unit within the existing approved budget for the service. It is expected that the implementation of the strategy and action plan will also be managed within existing approved budgets. The funding of activities that support delivery of the strategy will be the subject of separate decision reports in line with the Council's normal decision-making process and/or considered as part of the annual budget setting process. This includes changes to any existing grant funding that is currently used to fund VAWG related activity (as this could change over time).

The 2022/23 budget proposals include an increased investment in VAWG of £100,000 annually and an increased investment in ending modern slavery and exploitation of £85,000 annually.

Implications provided by: Kellie Gooch, Head of Finance (Environment), 04/01/2022
Verified by Andrew Lord, Head of Strategic Planning and Monitoring, 04/01/2022
Verified by Emily Hill, Director of Finance on 26/01/22

Legal Implications

The Council has duties under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 to provide support for victims of domestic abuse. It is subject to a duty under s17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect on and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. The strategy set out in this report for ending violence against women and girls contributes to the Council complying with its duties under these provisions.

Implications provided by: John Sharland, Senior solicitor (Contracts and procurement), 04/01/2022

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report – None

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Ending VAWG in Hammersmith & Fulham

1. Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is the umbrella term used to describe a range of violent and abusive acts and behaviours, which are predominantly, but not exclusively, directed against women and girls. This term is used to describe abuse against all genders but highlights the disproportionate impact on women and girls. There are multiple forms of VAWG, whether physical, sexual, psychological, or economic. Abuse can include violence in public places, such as sexual harassment, or within the private sphere such as intimate partner violence.

Whilst victim is the legal definition necessary within the criminal justice system survivors is a nationally recognised term to describe someone who has been a victim of abuse but who has continued to live, it is a positive term of empowerment and therefore used throughout the strategy.

The prevalence of VAWG is reflected in national statistics that indicate that 1 in 3 women and 1 in 5 men will experience Domestic Abuse at some point in their lives and 1 in 5 women and 1 in 10 men will experience stalking and harassment at some point in their lives. This also reflects how these crimes disproportionately affect women and girls.

The difficulty of capturing an accurate statistical picture of VAWG is nationally recognised. This is for a range of reasons including the hidden nature and consistent underreporting of VAWG issues, alongside inconsistent approaches to data collection across organisations. Our data picture is therefore only the tip of the iceberg. We have used data from our strategic assessment, national VAWG data and data from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). We have also used data from the Angelou VAWG service commissioned by Hammersmith & Fulham (H&F) and the results of a resident survey to inform our strategy.

There were 1,095 referrals to the H&F commissioned Angelou VAWG service in 2020-21, 52% of referrals were for Black and Asian women or people from another global majority background. Global Majority is a collective term that first and foremost speaks to and encourages those so-called to think of themselves as belonging to the global majority. It refers to people who are Black, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the global south, and or have been racialised as 'ethnic minorities'. 10% of referrals were for women with a disability and 58% of survivors referred stated that they had poor mental health. In 2017 MOPAC estimated that 2,983 women who live in H&F had undergone FGM. Our resident survey conducted in 2021 received 68 responses. 57% of respondents said they had personally experienced street harassment and 53% said they had witnessed a woman being harassed by a man or group of men 1-2 times in the last year.

Coordinated Community Response

2. The strategy outlines our Coordinated Community Response (CCR) to ending VAWG, which states that it is everyone's business to work together to end these crimes. It sets out our four objectives to ending VAWG, which are:

1. VAWG is prevented,
2. Survivors are supported,
3. Abusers are held to account, and
4. Collaboration to create change

Co-production

3. The H&F strategy has been co-produced by partners across the borough, including survivors, residents, businesses, community groups and multi-agency professionals. This consultation highlighted the need for the strategy to be accessible to everyone. We have adopted an ecological model in responding to VAWG and there is guidance throughout the strategy highlighting how individuals, community groups, multi-agency professionals and wider society can play their part in ending VAWG.

Design

4. Once the content of the strategy has been approved, design colleagues will produce a final version and we will produce an accessible to be published at the same time. We plan to use videos throughout the strategy which will include partners and service providers to demonstrate that this strategy is for everyone and has been developed in partnership.

Reason for the decision

5. The Council has statutory duties to protect victims of VAWG. Ending VAWG is also a strategic priority for H&F. Supporting victims of abuse (including victims of all forms of VAWG such as FGM) is a manifesto commitment incorporated into H&F's business plan. Ending VAWG is similarly a strategic priority for the Community Safety Partnership and is a mandatory high harm priority for all London boroughs. Both the Children's Safeguarding Board and the Safeguarding Adult's Board have ending VAWG within their action plans and priorities.
6. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 also aims to strengthen the support for victims of abuse by statutory agencies and sets out provisions to do so including recognising children as victims of abuse.
7. Adopting the strategy contributes to the fulfilment by the Council of these obligations, as well as promoting and protecting adults and children's human rights. The strategy also aligns with the key objectives outlined in the government's VAWG Strategy 2021, prioritising prevention, supporting victims, pursuing perpetrators, and strengthening the system.

Equality Implications

8. There are no direct negative equality implications, under the Equality Act 2010, for those service users from groups with certain protected characteristics by the approval of recommended option outlined in this paper. A positive impact on certain groups with protected characteristics is anticipated. The strategy

recognises experiences of racism, classism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia, and discrimination against disabled people. It has a positive impact in terms of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage, and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief and sex. The H&F Equality Impact Analysis Tool has been completed (Appendix 2).

Risk Management Implications

9. The Council has statutory duties to protect victims of VAWG. Ending VAWG is a strategic priority for H&F. The report recommends approval of the Ending Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy 2022–2027 which outlines the Council's Coordinated Community Response to ending violence against women & girls through four key objectives. This is in line with the priority of creating a compassionate council and is a key priority for the Community Safety Partnership, the Children's Safeguarding Board, and the Safeguarding Adults Board.

Implications provided by: David Hughes, Director of Audit, Fraud, Risk and Insurance, telephone: 07817 507 695, 31/01/2022.

Climate and Ecological Emergency Implications

10. There are no implications for climate and ecology as a result of the strategy. A robust action plan will be developed to support the strategy and any services commissioned as a result will be assessed on an individual basis.

Implications provided by: Hinesh Mehta, Strategic Lead, Climate Emergency, telephone 07960 470125, 31/01/2022.

Consultation

11. The strategy has been co-produced and as such, focus groups were held with a variety of agencies and drafts of the strategy shared at various stages
12. We held four workshops with survivors. Feedback from survivors have informed the strategy throughout development and there is a section in the strategy "What survivors with lived experience told us". Discussions with both survivors and stakeholders have informed the four objectives within the strategy.
13. We held three stakeholder workshops with a range of multi-agency professionals from the borough including the Metropolitan Police, local NHS trusts and Non-Governmental Organisations. A range of VAWG experts and service providers were also consulted to ensure that the strategy has an intersectional and inclusive approach. Standing Together's 'In Search of Excellence' report also provided insight into how to strengthen our Coordinated Community Response. H&F Children's Services adult safeguarding, and housing colleagues were also involved in the stakeholder workshops and we consulted the VAWG Board on three occasions.

14. We held an all-staff event to present the proposed strategy that was attended by 180 team members.
15. The council also received 68 responses to an online survey aimed at residents.
16. Participant details were kept anonymous to protect individual's safety and to allow them to speak openly during the above consultations.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2022-2027

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment