

**Report to:** Councillor Rebecca Harvey, Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion and Community Safety

**Date:** 15/09/2025

**Subject:** Procurement Strategy for Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Services

**Report author:** Claire Horn, VAWG Commissioning and Programme Lead

**Responsible Director:** Bram Kainth, Executive Director – Place

---

## **SUMMARY**

This report outlines the procurement strategy for the recommissioning of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) services in London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. (LBHF) The proposed procurement will cover three Lots: (1) Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Coordination, (2) VAWG Integrated Support Service (ISS), and (3) Harmful Practices Coordination. The services are essential to meeting our strategic responsibilities around VAWG.

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Council (the “Council”) will be leading the procurement process on behalf of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) and Westminster City Council (WCC). The service has operated within the three boroughs for the previous 10 years with the current contract due to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> September 2026. The strategy proposes re-procuring three contracts for VAWG services which will run for 3 (three) years with the possibility of two additional 1 (one) year extensions.

This procurement will ensure continuation and improvement of survivor-focused, trauma-informed services and coordination functions that support both frontline delivery and strategic partnerships. Approval is sought to proceed to procurement with the recommended model.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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 Appendix 1 is not for publication on the basis that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that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

---

**Wards Affected:** All

---

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the <a href="#">H&amp;F Corporate Plan</a> and the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	This approach creates opportunities to involve local and specialist voluntary and community sector organisations in service delivery, particularly through the structuring of Lots. The Harmful Practices Lot has been designed to be accessible to smaller, 'by and for' organisations. All staff will benefit from appropriate employment terms and conditions, including payment of the London Living Wage or equivalent.
Creating a compassionate and inclusive council	The recommissioned services will offer trauma-informed, intersectional support that reflects the diverse needs of local communities, including 'by and for' provision for marginalised groups, and will be delivered with compassion through survivor-centred, dignity-led approaches that prioritise emotional safety, empowerment, and culturally responsive care.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	The recommissioning process has been shaped through engagement with survivors, service professionals, and suppliers.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	Joint commissioning achieves economies of scale while maintaining sovereign control, delivering high-quality services within current budget constraints and avoiding duplication
Taking pride in H&F	Delivering high-quality support to survivors reflects the Council's commitment to its values and community standards.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	Suppliers will be expected to minimise environmental impact through responsible contract delivery.

## Financial Impact

This report sets out the proposed Procurement Strategy for the procurement of a new three-year contract for the VAWG Service (with the opportunity for two further 1-year extensions), effective from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2026. It is proposed to be procured as three separate lots, comprising MARAC Coordination, VAWG Integrated Support Service (ISS), and Harmful Practices Coordination.

The budget implications of the resulting contracts will be considered as part of the subsequent contract award reports. For information, the service is currently funded

from existing service revenue budgets in Community Safety, and it is expected that the new contract will be funded in the same way.

*Kellie Gooch, Head of Finance (Place), 14<sup>th</sup> August 2025*

*Verified by: Andre Mark, Head of Finance (Strategic Planning and Investment), 27<sup>th</sup> August 2025*

## **Legal Implications**

The Council has a duty to provide support to victims of domestic abuse under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. There is an additional duty on local authorities to collaborate with policing bodies and care boards in relation to support for survivors of domestic abuse. The services to be provided under these proposed contracts will enable the Council to undertake these statutory functions.

The Procurement Act 2023 applies to the provision of these services. The proposed use of an open procedure is compliant with the legislation. It is proposed that the procurement is carried out jointly with RBKC and the WCC, but each authority will have its own sovereign contract.

This will be a high value contract under the Council's Contract Standing Orders (CSOs). The use of an open procedure under the Procurement Act is an approved method of procurement for a contract of this value.

The procurement of these services is a key decision under the Council's constitution and needs to be included on the key decision list on the Council's website.

*John Sharland, Special Projects Lawyer, 13<sup>th</sup> August 2025*

## **Procurement Comments**

The services being jointly commissioned are classified as above threshold "Light touch" services under the Procurement Regulations 2024 and our own CSOs. The Council are acting as lead authority under this collaborative procurement and will ensure all necessary transparency notices are issued naming all participating authorities. The process will be carried out in accordance with the Council's CSO's and the participating Councils will be involved in both the documentation development and also the evaluation process. The participating councils will need to complete their own governance processes prior to award and then sign their own contracts once the process has been completed.

Procurement have advised the commissioner on requirements of the new Procurement Act and Regulations and the choice of procedure. Procurement team members will continue to work alongside the commissioners to finalise the tender documents and issue the necessary tender notices.

Commissioners are advised to continue to work through the workflow steps, set up in the capitalE-sourcing eProcurement system, taking note that Conflict of Interest Assessment must be made at all stages of the process.

## Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

---

## DETAILED ANALYSIS

### Background

1. The current VAWG services across LBHF, RBKC and WCC were jointly commissioned but each borough manages their own sovereign contract. The contracts will expire in October 2026.
2. The services provided address the critical needs of survivors of domestic abuse and other forms of VAWG. The current services are provided through 2 (two) contracts, the first is for Coordination Services which is currently delivered by Standing Together against Domestic Abuse (STADA). The second contract is for the VAWG front door services currently delivered by the Angelou Partnership (with lead agency Advance).
3. The current Coordination Services contract comprises two main components:
  - **MARAC Coordination** – Facilitates a joined-up, multi-agency response to high-risk domestic abuse cases. This coordination ensures key partners collaborate effectively to develop robust safety plans for survivors and their families.
  - **Specialist Domestic Abuse Court (SDAC) Coordination** – Supports the delivery of specialist domestic abuse courts, helping to create a more streamlined and effective criminal justice pathway for domestic abuse cases.
4. Over the past year, officers have undertaken work to ensure that our recommissioning process is evidence-based and shaped by the voices of those who use and deliver VAWG services. This has included engagement with survivors, professionals across statutory services, and third sector organisations, to understand their experiences of the current system and their priorities for the future.
5. We have also worked closely with the Business Intelligence team to produce a comprehensive needs assessment. This has provided valuable quantitative and qualitative insights into what is working well, as well as identifying gaps in the current offer. Some of these gaps (including the need for longer-term therapeutic support, and the absence of a dedicated service for men and boys affected by domestic abuse) cannot be addressed within the current financial envelope but we have the evidence base to apply for relevant funding opportunities as and when they present themselves.

6. Based on evidence gathered throughout our needs assessment and commissioning review, we intend to restructure the coordination elements to better reflect market capabilities and drive innovation:
- The MARAC coordination function will be a standalone contract which will allow a more competitive process, enabling specialist organisations with experience in multi-agency work to bid for this role who may not have the criminal justice expertise to fulfil the other elements of the current contract
  - We are adding a requirement for Harmful Practices Coordination to focus specifically on community outreach and case identification ensuring harmful practices do not go undetected. By having this as a separate lot we hope to encourage bids from smaller, community-led organisations. We aim to tap into their specialist insight, cultural competence, and trusted community presence, which are crucial for identifying cases and reaching individuals who may not otherwise engage with mainstream services.
  - In light of ongoing conversations with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) following the Gauke review, the funding responsibility for the SDAC coordination role is under consideration. Therefore, this element will not be included in this commissioning exercise while decisions are pending.

## **Reasons for Decision**

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

## **Contract Specifications Summary**

8. The forthcoming commissioning exercise is structured to procure three distinct yet interdependent services, each forming a crucial part of the Council's Coordinated Community Response (CCR) <sup>1</sup>to VAWG. These Lots reflect both the evidence gathered through needs assessments and feedback from survivors, professionals, and delivery partners.

### **Lot 1 – MARAC Coordination**

9. The MARAC Coordination service is a cornerstone of the local response to domestic abuse, overseeing cases classified as high-risk. The supplier will be responsible for the end-to-end coordination of the MARAC process, ensuring timely information-sharing, structured safety planning, and shared accountability across agencies. This function is critical to safeguarding survivors and children and ensuring that interventions are aligned and effective.
10. In recognition of challenges identified through the recent needs assessment, this Lot now includes enhanced requirements aimed at improving the quality

---

<sup>1</sup> A Coordinated Community Response (CCR) to Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is a multi-agency approach that brings together statutory and voluntary services to ensure a consistent, survivor-centred, and holistic response to VAWG across prevention, protection, and provision.

and consistency of MARAC operations. This includes establishment of a MARAC Steering Group, convening quarterly to review themes, challenges, and system-level learning. The group will support continuous improvement across the wider CCR, embedding reflective practice and strengthening partnership working.

## **Lot 2 – VAWG Integrated Support Service (ISS)**

11. The VAWG ISS service will continue to provide support to survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, stalking, and other forms of Violence Against Women and Girls. Historically, commissioning relied on an outcome-based specification where we outlined our expectations for the service but gave providers flexibility in delivery. However, feedback from stakeholders has highlighted areas where greater operational clarity is required to improve consistency and access. As a result, this commissioning round introduces some specific service expectations:
  - **Strengthened Duty Management:** The ‘front door’ to the service must operate with clear protocols and performance standards, ensuring that survivors and professionals receive a consistent, trauma-informed response from their first contact. Procurement responses must include the service delivery plan for their duty system and how this will be managed within the lifetime of the project and within budget.
  - **Tiered Case Management Model:** The service will deploy five Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs), to support the most at-risk and complex cases. The supplier has the option to use Domestic Abuse Caseworkers to support lower-risk cases, enabling timely intervention and reducing caseloads. This model reflects best practice guidance from Safe Lives and aims to optimise impact and resource distribution.
  - In recognition of potential future funding opportunities, the commissioning strategy includes a provision for the expansion of service scope to incorporate specialist counselling services. This element is considered a **'known unknown'** and will be activated subject to the confirmation of additional financial resources at any time during the lifespan of the contract. This ensures flexibility to accommodate this service through contract variation at the point that we become aware of the nature of future funding. The types of service that we’ve advertised in the specification that we’d like to add on to this service is therapeutic support for survivors and support for children and young people. A further report will be presented for a decision in the event that this potential funding is confirmed.

## **Lot 3 – Harmful Practices Coordination**

12. This commissioning strand is focused on systems coordination and proactive community engagement in response to harmful practices, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and so-called ‘honour’-based abuse.
13. The function is not designed as a direct support service, but rather as a strategic and community-facing role to ensure that these forms of abuse are not missed. The equivalent of a Part-Time Equivalent role will work to identify cases through outreach, engagement, awareness-raising and attendance at MARAC

## **Procurement Route Analysis of Options**

14. The services being procured have been identified as falling within the scope of Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV): 85312400: Welfare services not delivered through residential institutions. The Contract Value, assuming that any options to extend will be taken, means the procurement falls in-scope of the Procurement Act 2023, Procurement Regulations 2024, and the Councils CSOs.
15. All lots will be commissioned via an open procedure. potential suppliers must have an expertise in VAWG services and be Safe Lives qualified. potential suppliers can apply for one or more of the Lots. The Council will lead the procurement exercise for two neighbouring boroughs of RBKC and WCC as the shared service model delivers economies of scales and improved services for survivors across the boroughs.
16. In consideration of the future commissioning arrangements for MARAC coordination, VAWG Independent Support Services, and Harmful Practices coordination, the following procurement options were explored:

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

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

### **Option 2: Decommission the service or requirement – Not recommended**

18. Decommissioning has been considered but ruled out due to ethical and legislative factors: The Council's VAWG strategy includes clear commitments to improving responses to violence against women and girls, and service removal would contradict these aims. Furthermore, the UK Government has publicly committed to halving VAWG, and local authorities play a key role in delivering this outcome. The 2024 Victims and Prisoners Act introduces a statutory duty for relevant authorities to collaborate in commissioning support for survivors, ceasing services would breach this duty. Decommissioning would also result in reputational harm, exacerbate unmet need, and disproportionately impact vulnerable communities.

### **Option 3: Single Borough Commissioning – Not recommended**

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

#### **Option 4: Commission with Neighbouring Boroughs – Recommended**

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

#### **Market Analysis and Engagement**

21. A Preliminary Market Engagement was held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025. The event outlined the proposed lot structure and priorities and gave suppliers an opportunity to input and raise questions. We followed up with a questionnaire to gain further insights into the proposed specifications and had follow up calls with suppliers to discuss their responses.
22. Distortion of competition during market engagement activities was avoided through publication of a pre-market engagement notice on the Find a Tender Service (FTS) at [Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) Services - Find a Tender.](#)

#### **Conflicts of Interest**

23. All officers and decision makers, including elected members (where appropriate), have been required to complete a Conflict-of-Interest Declaration form to record any actual, potential, and/or perceived conflicts, along with appropriate mitigations (as appropriate), on the Conflicts Assessment.
24. Approval of this Procurement Strategy by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) member and elected member (as applicable) constitutes their declaration that they do not have any actual, potential, and/or perceived conflicts, relevant to



this procurement, except where a specific Conflict of Interest Declaration form has been completed and provided, advising differently.

25. The Conflicts Assessment will be kept under review and updated throughout the life of the project (from project inception to contract termination).

### **Local Economy and Social/Added Value**

26. The Market includes local and London-based Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprises (VCSE) organisations with deep expertise in VAWG. The specification for the Lot 2: ISS Service encourages consortia or partnership bids to strengthen delivery and allow for a wider knowledge base that reflects our populations
27. Social value will account for 10% of the overall award criteria except for Lot 3 in this procurement. We are working in partnership with the Social Value Portal, who will independently evaluate submissions to ensure consistency and transparency. In recognition of the importance of workforce sustainability in VAWG services, we are developing bespoke social value measures that focus on the welfare, development, and retention of staff. This includes encouraging suppliers to demonstrate how they will support staff wellbeing, offer progression opportunities, and create stable working environments that contribute to high-quality service delivery. These measures reflect our commitment to commissioning not only effective services, but also ethical and resilient organisations.

### **Lot Considerations**

28. The contract has been split into Lots to ensure accessibility for smaller and specialist suppliers and allow for targeted commissioning. Suppliers can bid for one or more Lot in this procurement exercise. The inclusion of a dedicated Harmful Practices Coordinator Lot has been designed specifically to attract Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and VCSEs, by offering a lower-value, standalone opportunity that aligns with their capacity and expertise. We will also be allowing joint bids or consortia to encourage SME accessibility for Lot 2.

<b>Lot Number</b>	<b>Lot Title and/or Description</b>
Lot 1.	MARAC Coordination.
Lot 2.	VAWG Integrated Support Service (ISS)
Lot 3.	Harmful Practice Coordination

### **People Based Considerations**

29. The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulation 2006 (UKSI 2006/246) (TUPE) may be applicable to this contract. A full TUPE and

pension information memorandum will be shared as part of the procurement process.

## **Risk Assessment and Proposed Mitigations**

30. The table below includes the key risks and proposed mitigations identified as being relevant to this requirement.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Mitigations</b>
1. Timeline Slippage into Pre-Election Period	Delays in evaluation, moderation, or governance across the three boroughs could push key decisions (e.g., award, contract signing) into the pre-election period, restricting activity	High	Medium–High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Lock in governance board dates well in advance.</li><li>2. Build in contingency time for moderation and standstill.</li><li>3. Escalate slippage risks early.</li></ol>
2. No Bids for Harmful Practices Lot	The low annual value may deter suppliers from bidding, especially if delivery expectations are unclear	Medium	Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Engage the market early to test appetite and delivery models (ongoing).</li><li>2. Offered flexibility in delivery (e.g., no requirement for this to sit just under 1 post.</li></ol>

## **Contract Duration Considerations**

31. The Contract will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2026 and run for a period of 36 (thirty-six) months until 31<sup>st</sup> September 2029. There will be 2 (two) further 12-month extension options, which would take the service to 31<sup>st</sup> September 2031, in essence a maximum 60 (sixty) month contract.
32. This is in line with the VAWG Commissioning Toolkit from the Home Office which recommends multi-year funding cycles to avoid fragmentation and improve survivor experiences.

## **Timetable**

33. The table below provides an estimated timetable of the competition process through to contract commencing.

<b>Action</b>		<b>Date</b>
1.	Key Decision Entry (Strategy)	Friday, 11 July 2025
2.	Contracts Assurance Board (Strategy)	Wednesday, 3 September 2025
3.	Political Cabinet Sign off (Strategy)	Monday, 15 September 2025
	Cabinet – For information (Strategy)	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> October 2025
4.	Preliminary Market Engagement Notice	Monday, 7 July 2025
5.	Tender Notice	Wednesday, 5 November 2025
6.	Closing Date for Clarifications	Friday, 19 December 2025
7.	Closing Date for Procurement Responses	Wednesday, 7 January 2026
8.	Evaluation of Procurement Responses	Thursday, 8 January 2026 to Tuesday, 27 January 2026
9.	SLT/Cabinet Member (Award)	Wednesday, 4 February 2026
10.	Contracts Assurance Board (Award)	Wednesday, 25 February 2026
11.	Key Decision Entry (Award)	Wednesday, 7 January 2026
12.	Contract Award Notice	Thursday, 19 March 2026
13.	Standstill Period Ends	Monday, 30 March 2026
14.	Contract Engrossment	Monday, 20 April 2026
15.	Contract Detail Notice	Tuesday, 21 April 2026
16.	Contract Mobilisation and Implementation	April to September 2026
17.	Contract Commencement Date	Thursday, 1 October 2026

## **Selection and Award Criteria**

34. To satisfy the Conditions of Participation, Potential Suppliers will be required to demonstrate relevant experience in delivering trauma-informed support services to survivors of domestic abuse or violence against women and girls. Potential Suppliers who cannot evidence sufficient and appropriate experience aligned with the scope of the contract, in addition to financial sustainability requirements, and living wage commitments, may be excluded from further consideration.
35. We are recommending a 70% Quality / 30% Price ratio. because the primary objective is to deliver the highest quality of support to survivors for the available funding, and the contract value is fixed. The commissioning intention is not to reduce expenditure but to ensure that the available funding delivers maximum impact for survivors. A higher quality weighting ensures that bids are assessed primarily on their ability to meet survivors' needs effectively.

Criteria	Weighting	
	Quality	Added Value
Quality, including Added Value (70%)	60%	10%
Price (30%)	30%	
Total (100%)	100%	

36. **Fixed Budget Approach:** Each Lot has a defined annual budget. Potential suppliers will be assessed on the value and volume of services they can deliver within the fixed budget. Potential suppliers must provide a detailed pricing schedule showing direct and indirect costs. Evaluation will consider:
- Ratio of indirect costs vs. direct costs to encourage allocation of resources towards service delivery and minimise overhead (head office fee/surplus/profit).
  - Reward bidders that deliver the maximum number of staff hours working directly with front facing day to day service delivery.
37. The quality envelopes for each of the Lots will allow the evaluators to examine service delivery model, risk management and integration into the wider Coordinated Community Response (CCR) to VAWG.
38. Added Value (Social Value) will account for 10% (out of the 70% Quality) award criteria for lots 1 & 2 in this procurement. Lot 3, due to its low value and the desire to encourage smaller supplier to participate will not include added value. Other quality criteria will be tailored where appropriate to be proportional to the contract value.
39. Each potential supplier's overall combined score for price and quality will be used to identify the preferred supplier, who provides the Most Advantageous Tender (MAT), that being those with the highest overall score(s), being recommended for a contract award.

## Contract Management

40. The commissioned VAWG services will be contract-managed through quarterly monitoring review meetings, supported by supplier-submitted reports detailing key performance data, including service uptake, outcomes for survivors, safeguarding incidents, and demographic reach. This approach ensures accountability and continuous improvement. KPIs for the contract are likely to include:

### Lot 1 – MARAC Coordination

- Cases have produced action plans designed to improve safety and reduce risk.
- 100% of all monthly case lists, minutes and actions documents are distributed within the timescales set out in the MARAC Operating and Information Sharing Protocol.

- 4 introductions to MARAC training sessions delivered each year via the 3 borough multi-agency LSOP training programme.
- The MARAC steering group will meet at least quarterly, with agreed terms of reference and membership from all key statutory and voluntary partners.

### **Lot 2 – VAWG ISS**

- % of service users who report increased safety and feelings of safety as measured by exit surveys.
- % of service users who report a reduction in abuse due to the support and advice received from services as measured by closing assessments.
- Percentage of service users contacted and engaged in support.
- Report on outreach activities to increase engagement and access to services.

### **Lot 3 – HP Coordination**

- MARAC attendance and case input.
- Number of professionals trained.
- Outreach contacts.
- Data submissions.
- Annual service review meeting with commissioners.

## **Equality and Inclusion Implications**

An EQIA can be found at Appendix 2 and was approved by Yvonne Okiyo on the 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025.

*Verified by Yvonne Okiyo, Strategic Lead for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025*

## **Risk Management Implications**

41. As noted above, the low value of the overall funding envelope may lead to a low number of procurement responses, however there is a quality risk, that any potential supplier will be unable to deliver the expected service to the defined quality leading to action and probable disengagement. This in turn leads to a people risk where the service is discontinued thereby impacting vulnerable residents.
42. Several responses are available;
  - To accept the risk, in which case no further action is necessary; or
  - To reduce the risk by increasing the funds available; or
  - To reduce the risk by putting place mechanisms to run the service directly should it fail.

*Jules Binney, Risk and Assurance Manager, 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025*

## **Climate and Ecological Emergency Implications**

43. While the primary focus of VAWG services is on safeguarding and support, we recognise that all commissioned services have a role to play in contributing to environmental sustainability. Suppliers will be encouraged to consider the climate impact of their operations, including travel, energy use, and procurement of materials. This includes offering remote support options where appropriate to reduce travel emissions and using energy-efficient premises for outreach.

*Verified by: Charlotte Slaven, Head of Climate Strategy & Engagement, 8<sup>th</sup> August 2025*

## **Local Economy and Social Value Implications**

44. In line with the Council's Added Value Policy and Sourcing Strategy, this procurement will dedicate 10% of the overall weighting to Added Value.
45. On award of the contract(s), the commissioner will ensure that the Added Value commitment offered at tender stage is stated as a contractual output.
46. Our standard contracts include clauses which refer to penalties for non-delivery against social value commitments.
47. It is recommended the Social Value Officer and commissioner meet at each stage of this procurement to ensure that the Added Value received is aligned with the 3 categories within the Added Value strategy and the Added Value Matrix ((1) Inclusive Economy, (2) Happier and Kinder H&F, (3) Responding to the Climate Emergency).
48. Social Value Portal will be used for evaluating the Added Value element of all tender submissions in compliance with the agreed corporate procurement approach. The commissioner will work closely with the Social Value Officer to ensure commitments are reported regularly on the Social Value Portal by their suppliers.

*Harry Buck, Social Value Officer (Procurement), 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025*

## **Digital Services and Information Management Implications**

49. Digital Services has been involved as part of the wider VAWG Services procurement exercise. Do note this document is requesting approval of the procurement strategy and digital implications of any resulting contract awards will be considered and assessed in the later stages. It is important that Digital Services continue to be an integral part of the exercise to ensure that any IT requirements are met, that all necessary safeguards, permissions and budgets are in place, and that any IT work undertaken is in alignment with the digital strategy.

50. **Information Management Implications:** A Data Privacy Impact Assessment (DPIA) will need to be completed to ensure that all the potential data protection risks around this new contract are properly assessed with mitigating actions agreed and implemented.
51. Suppliers will be expected to have a Data Protection policy in place and staff will be expected to have received Data Protection training. Contracts will need to include the Council's data protection and processing schedule, which is compliant with the UK General Data Protection regulation (UK GDPR).

*Vincen Arivannoor, Strategic Relationship Manager, 18<sup>th</sup> August 2025*

## **Consultation**

52. Extensive consultation has shaped the development of the commissioned service specification. Survivors, professionals across statutory and voluntary sectors, and specialist services representing communities with protected characteristics were engaged to ensure that the service reflects diverse experiences, needs, and barriers.
53. In addition, engagement with the market was undertaken to test feasibility and delivery implications of proposed service models and outcomes. This dual consultation approach supports an inclusive and responsive design, ensuring that services are both trauma-informed and capable of addressing complex needs, including those faced by individuals with protected characteristics and/or multiple disadvantage

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 (Exempt) – Project Financial Details  
Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

**Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

Overall Information	Details of Full Equality Impact Analysis
Financial Year and Quarter	Q2 2025/26
Name and details of policy, strategy, function, project, activity, or programme	<p>Title of EIA: procurement of VAWG services</p> <p>Short summary: The assessment evaluates the equality impacts of re-commissioning H&amp;F's VAWG services contracts. This procurement is made up of three Lots:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) Coordination - the service provider will be responsible for the end-to-end coordination of the MARAC process, ensuring timely information-sharing, structured safety planning, and shared accountability across agencies.</li> <li>2. VAWG Integrated Support Service (ISS) - front door specialist support service will continue to provide independent support to survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, stalking, and other forms of VAWG.</li> <li>3. Harmful Practices Coordination - The function is not designed as a direct support service, but rather as a strategic and community-facing role to ensure that these forms of abuse are not missed. The equivalent of a PTE will work to identify cases through outreach, engagement, and awareness-raising and attendance at MARAC</li> </ol>
Lead Officer	<p>Name: Claire Horn</p> <p>Position: VAWG Programme and Commissioning Lead</p> <p>Email: Claire.horn@lbhf.gov.uk</p> <p>Telephone No: 07860649918</p>
Date of completion of final EIA	01 / 08 / 25



Section 02	Scoping of Full EIA		
Analyse the impact of the policy, strategy, function, project, activity, or programme	Analyse the impact of the policy on the protected characteristics (including where people / groups may appear in more than one protected characteristic). You should use this to determine whether the policy will have a positive, neutral, or negative impact on equality, giving due regard to relevance and proportionality.		
	Protected characteristic	Analysis	Impact: Positive, Negative, Neutral
	Age	<p>Specification asks that services will be provided for ages 16+ and support women with children.</p> <p>Services are inclusive of older survivors and specification recognises that older women may face distinct barriers to accessing support. To address this, the specification requires providers to deliver community-based outreach, including in settings, which are more familiar and accessible to older individuals who may be less comfortable with digital platforms or formal service environments. In addition to in-person outreach, the service offers telephone-based support, ensuring that survivors who may be digitally excluded or have mobility challenges can still access help in a way that suits their needs. This multi-channel approach enhances accessibility and ensures that older survivors are not disadvantaged due to age-related factors such as lower digital literacy, isolation, or health conditions.</p>	<p>Neutral</p> <p>Positive</p>
	Disability	<p>The specification asks that services will support victims irrespective of long-term health conditions.</p> <p>The ISS specification aims to provide high quality support which is accessible and meets the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act by providing specialist support for victims with protected characteristics and/or complex needs or facing multiple disadvantage. The specification asks the service tailors support</p>	<p>Neutral</p> <p>Positive</p>

		to disabled survivors based on their needs i.e. providing easy read information. The in-person outreach will take place in accessible venues.		
	Gender reassignment	<p>THE ISS Specification asks for a provider who can support LGBTQI+ survivors, including those who are transgender or non-binary. Recent legal developments clarify that “sex” under the Equality Act 2010 refers to biological sex. This means that trans women are not legally considered “women” for the purposes of sex-based protections. However, gender reassignment remains a protected characteristic under the Equality Act, and trans individuals are still protected from discrimination.</p> <p>In light of this, the commissioning approach remains committed to supporting trans survivors. Where services include women-only spaces, providers will be expected to have clear, lawful, and trauma-informed policies that explain how trans survivors will be supported—whether through inclusion in those spaces or through alternative arrangements that ensure safety, dignity, and access to support.</p> <p>The services meet the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act by providing specialist support for victims with protected characteristics and/or complex needs or facing multiple disadvantage.</p>	Positive	
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	The service specification is aimed at all residents, irrespective of marriage and civil partnership.	Neutral	
	Pregnancy and maternity	<p>The service specification is aimed at all residents, irrespective of pregnancy and maternity</p> <p>The services meet the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act by providing specialist support for victims with protected characteristics and/or complex needs or facing multiple disadvantage.</p>	<p>Neutral</p> <p>Positive</p>	

		<p>Partners will be aware of the increased risk of Domestic Abuse during and following pregnancy and will be able to support victim/survivors through pregnancy and maternity and will train professionals to be aware of this.</p> <p>Furthermore, the service is designed to support survivors with young children, recognising that childcare responsibilities can be a significant barrier to accessing help. Providers are expected to offer flexible appointment options helping to reduce practical obstacles and ensure that survivors with parenting responsibilities can engage with services safely and effectively.</p>	Positive	
			Positive	
	Race	<p>The services are aimed at all residents, irrespective of Race.</p> <p>The services recognise that minoritised groups may face additional barriers. It puts this in the context of Intersectionality and requests responses are tailored to an individual's needs. The specification requests that providers work with specialist by and for providers who specialise in working with minoritised communities and can offer support in the survivors own language and are culturally sensitive .</p> <p>The strategy aims to commission a Harmful Practice coordinator to conduct community outreach and attend MARACs to identify and respond to HP cases. Advocates for racially minoritised victims at MARACs, ensuring their cases are not overlooked. Builds trust with minoritised communities who may be hesitant to engage with statutory services due to historical or systemic racial bias.</p>	Neutral	
			Positive	
			Positive	
	Religion/belief (including non-belief)	<p>The services are aimed at all residents, irrespective of religion/belief</p> <p>The HP coordination service supports individuals from diverse religious backgrounds to recognise harmful practices that may be normalised within their communities. Through culturally competent outreach and safeguarding-led messaging, the service empowers victims to understand their rights and access support, without undermining their identity or beliefs.</p>	Neutral	
			Positive	

		<p>Services are expected to respect religious sensitivity when supporting survivors through measures such as accommodating prayer times and religious observances by offering flexible appointment scheduling and avoiding key times for worship or fasting (e.g. during Ramadan, Lent or Sabbath observance). Offer gender preferences in support staff, particularly for survivors from faith backgrounds where interaction with male staff may be culturally or religiously inappropriate. Services should aim to provide female-only staff for one-to-one support.</p> <p>The services meet the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act by providing specialist support for victims with protected characteristics and/or complex needs or facing multiple disadvantage</p>	Positive	
	Sex	<p>The specification highlights the need to have women (and children) only spaces so that they can feel safe and recover. The service is therefore commissioned to respond to the needs of female victim/survivors. The specification recognises that domestic abuse is disproportionately perpetrated against women and girls.</p> <p>Commissioning a woman only service is a positive action that enables women and girls (some facing multiple forms of discrimination) equal opportunity to trauma informed support.</p> <p>The MARAC and HP Coordination service will work with victims irrespective of sex. This is inclusive of male survivors. Male survivors will be referred to appropriate support services e.g. the Ashraya project.</p> <p>The Equalities Act Schedule 3 Part 7 allows service providers to provide single- or separate-sex services for women and men, or provide services differently to women and men in certain circumstances</p>	Positive	
			Positive	
			Neutral	
	Sexual Orientation	The services are aimed at all residents, irrespective of sexual orientation	Neutral	
			Positive	

		There is a requirement in the ISS specification for a LGBTQI+ provider who would offer specialist support to LGBTQI+ survivors	
	Care Experienced as a Protected Characteristic	The services will be available to all residents, regardless of care experience. In alignment with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, they provide specialist support for victims with protected characteristics and/or facing complex needs and multiple disadvantage. We understand that individuals from this group are often disproportionately affected by trauma, systemic instability, and social exclusion, which can amplify risk factors for violence and abuse. Staff will have trauma informed training that specifically addresses the needs of minoritised groups, care leavers and those with multiple disadvantages across protected characteristics. Training that recognises systemic bias and discrimination, systemic instability, and social exclusion. This will be reported on annually. The service provider must monitor attendance and evaluate the impact of the training	Neutral
<p><b>Human Rights or Children's Rights</b></p> <p>If your decision has the potential to affect Human Rights or Children's Rights, please contact your Equality Lead for advice</p> <p>Will it affect Human Rights, as defined by the Human Rights Act 1998?</p> <p>No</p> <p>Will it affect Children's Rights, as defined by the UNCRC (1992)?</p> <p>Yes - The service supports 16 plus but will support people with children under 16 and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities to those children including making referrals to social services and supporting parents to engage with children and young people's services. The service will provide onward referrals to young people's services that directly support children affected by VAWG – e.g. Young Londoners VAWG services. The service will support children aged 16 to 18 and care leavers up to 25 and work with children and young people's services to fulfil their statutory duties toward these children and young people and ensure they are provided the support they need and are entitled to.</p>			

<b>Section 03</b>	<b>Analysis of relevant data</b> Examples of data can range from census data to customer satisfaction surveys. Data should involve specialist data and information and where possible, be disaggregated by different equality strands.
<b>Documents and data reviewed</b>	The specification has been shaped by borough-wide needs assessments, drawing on a mixed-methods approach. Qualitative data was sourced through extensive consultations with survivors, community members, professionals, and specialist services, ensuring that lived experience informed the design. Quantitative evidence was collected from service providers, statutory agencies, and publicly available datasets including census data. This data triangulation ensures a comprehensive understanding of local needs, disparities, and service gaps especially those affecting individuals with protected characteristics and/or multiple disadvantages which we have tried to address through the specification.
<b>New research</b>	If new research is required, please complete this section

<b>Section 04</b>	<b>Consultation</b>
<b>Consultation</b>	Details of consultation findings (if consultation is required. If not, please move to section 06)
<b>Analysis of consultation outcomes</b>	<p>Extensive consultation has shaped the development of the commissioned service specification. Survivors, professionals across statutory and voluntary sectors, and specialist services representing communities with protected characteristics were engaged to ensure that the service reflects diverse experiences, needs, and barriers.</p> <p>In addition, engagement with the market was undertaken to test feasibility and delivery implications of proposed service models and outcomes. This dual consultation approach supports an inclusive and responsive design, ensuring that services are both trauma-informed and capable of addressing complex needs, including those faced by individuals with protected characteristics and/or multiple disadvantage</p>

<b>Section 05</b>	<b>Analysis of impact and outcomes</b>
-------------------	--

<b>Analysis</b>	<p>Consultation findings confirm the importance of developing a service that reflects the diversity of Hammersmith &amp; Fulham's population. The specification incorporates 'by and for' specialist provision to ensure that communities facing disproportionate barriers, particularly those with protected characteristics have access to services designed and delivered by those with lived experience.</p> <p>This approach aligns with evidence from the borough-wide needs assessment, which highlighted the critical role of culturally responsive services in improving engagement, outcomes, and trust among historically underserved groups. By embedding 'by and for' requirements, the service advances equity, empowers communities, and fosters trauma-informed support.</p>
-----------------	--

<b>Section 06</b>	<b>Reducing any adverse impacts and recommendations</b>
<b>Outcome of Analysis</b>	N/a

<b>Section 07</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>
<b>Action Plan</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Require providers to collect anonymised data on service users, including intersectional data where possible</li> <li>2. Survivor feedback surveys to include questions about cultural sensitivity, accessibility, whether survivors felt safe and respected.</li> <li>3. Outreach activity reporting including Locations visited (e.g. family hubs, community centres, faith spaces), target groups engaged, materials used (e.g. translated leaflets, culturally appropriate messaging)</li> <li>4. Encourage providers to submit anon case studies that highlight accessibility challenges and successes.</li> <li>5. Conduct annual reviews of the Equality Impact Assessment to assess whether services are meeting accessibility goals and make adjustments as needed.</li> </ol>

<b>Section 08</b>	<b>Agreement, publication and monitoring</b>
<b>Senior Managers' sign-off</b>	<p>Name: Neil Thurlow</p> <p>Position: Assistant Director Community Safety and CCTV</p> <p>Email: Neil.Thurlow@lbhf.gov.uk</p>

<b>Key Decision Report (if relevant)</b>	Date of report to Cabinet/Cabinet Member: 09 /2025 Key equalities issues have been included: Yes
<b>Equalities Advice (where involved)</b>	Name: Yvonne Okiyo Position: Strategic Lead Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Date advice / guidance given: 12.08 25 Email: <a href="mailto:yvonne.okiyo@lbhf.gov.uk">yvonne.okiyo@lbhf.gov.uk</a> Telephone No: 07824 836 012