

# CABINET



Report subject	<b>Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy and Delivery Plan 2020-2023</b>
Meeting date	26 May 2021
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report outlines the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Community Safety Partnership Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy and accompanying delivery plan.</p> <p>This is the first Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy and Delivery Plan for BCP, which brings together the foundations of the work within legacy partnerships and identifies how partners will work together to meet the ambition that “no resident living within or visiting Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole should live in fear of, or experience domestic abuse.”</p> <p>The BCP Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy can be found at appendix 1 of this report.</p> <p>The report outlines a headline summary of the strategy and the commitments made by the BCP CSP of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preventing violence and abuse through a commitment to working to develop a “whole family, whole picture” approach across all our services</li><li>• A commitment to commissioning improved services for victims, perpetrators and children impacted by domestic abuse to ensure we have services in place that are effective in assessing and responding to multiple needs</li><li>• A commitment to working collaboratively to reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse</li><li>• Responding to perpetrators by supporting criminal justice agencies in pursuing them through the criminal justice system and a commitment to challenging and changing the behaviour of perpetrators through the availability of domestic abuse perpetrator programmes</li></ul> <p>The Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy Delivery Plan can be found at appendix 2 which has been developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders and partners, including service users. This plan describes how partners will work together to deliver against the commitments and priorities of the</p>

	<p>Strategy.</p> <p>The Domestic Abuse Bill 2020 will be introducing a new statutory duty on tier one local authorities, ensuring that all victims, including children, have access to safety and support within safe accommodation when they need it. The Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy and Delivery Plan addresses the requirements of the new duties as well as the local needs identified through the development of the strategy and plan.</p> <p>Finally, the report outlines the proposed allocations for additional Government funding recently announced as part of the imminent implementation of the Domestic Abuse Bill and in support of the delivery plan.</p>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(a) Cabinet supports the BCP Community Safety Partnership Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy and Delivery Plan.</b></li> <li><b>(b) Cabinet approve the allocation of MHCLG grant funding as set out in paragraph 32</b></li> </ul>
Reason for recommendations	<p>Domestic abuse can and does happen to anyone. It is indiscriminate of age, gender, race, profession or social background. In the UK around one in four women and one in six men will be affected by domestic abuse in their lifetime, and the NSPCC reports that around one in five children have been exposed to domestic abuse. Whatever the number of those impacted, it is too many; no one should live in fear.</p> <p>The Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is fully committed to playing its part to change this and to achieve the vision that 'no resident living in BCP should live in fear of or experience domestic abuse'.</p> <p>BCP Council's Corporate Strategy also commits to an ambitious vision of 'Vibrant Communities with outstanding quality of life where everyone plays an active role' and sets a specific objective of supporting people to live safe and independent lives under its Fulfilled Lives priority.</p> <p>The BCP Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy takes account of the strategic aims of the Council as well as the CSP. Local needs analysis, national research, guidance and best practice and lessons learnt from Domestic Homicide Reviews as well as consultation and extensive engagement across a range of stakeholders has resulted in a strategy which outlines a commitment to work with a range of partners across the statutory, corporate, community and voluntary sectors as well as service users, to drive the strategy forward and deliver against those aims.</p> <p>The Partnership has completed a series of task and finish groups</p>

	<p>responsible for supporting the development of a comprehensive delivery plan, appended to this report.</p> <p>In addition, this strategy and the accompanying delivery plan meet the new requirements of local authorities by the Domestic Abuse Bill 2020 by providing a framework to improve the response from statutory partners to domestic abuse. MHCLG is providing tier1 local authorities with grant funding to ensure they can meet new statutory duties.</p>
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor May Haines, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety
Corporate Director	Kate Ryan, Corporate Director Environment & Community
Report Authors	Andrew Williams, Head of Safer Communities
Wards	All Wards
Classification	For Decision

## Background

1. The Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Community Safety Partnership was formed in April 2019 following local government re-organisation. This is therefore the first Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy and Delivery Plan for BCP, which brings together the foundations of the work within legacy partnerships and identifies how partners will work together to meet the ambition that “no resident living within or visiting Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole should live in fear of, or experience domestic abuse.”
2. In forming this strategy, partners have taken the opportunity to rescale the ambition and reshape the response to domestic abuse for the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole geography.
3. Partners have worked together to consider how we can secure the best outcomes, learning from experience, considering evidence of need and looking at national best practice to frame the plans. This has also included feedback through a public consultation process as well as incorporating our understanding and lessons learnt from Domestic Homicide Reviews.

## Strategy Summary

4. The BCP Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy can be found at appendix 1.
5. Domestic abuse is something that can happen to anyone and its prevalence is as significant as many other social issues, if not more so. It is estimated that if one in four women and one in six men experience domestic abuse then this would impact around 53,000 women and 31,000 men residing across BCP.

6. During 2020/21 the BCP Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) heard 795 cases. The MARAC is a homicide prevention process and the cases referred into MARAC are considered those at significant risk of serious harm.
7. A snapshot of BCP Children's services data in May 2020 identified that 31.7% of all Children Social Care contacts were attributed to domestic abuse.
8. In June 2020 the local probation service reported that of all the offenders open to their service living within BCP, 31% were identified as domestic abuse perpetrators.
9. Local BCP housing data states only a proportion of victims fleeing domestic abuse are found refuge accommodation, with only 2.9% being placed in refuges and 82% being placed in alternative temporary accommodation such as hostels and B&Bs.
10. In April 2020 the BCP Community Safety Partnership agreed a Response Plan for domestic abuse, in light of increasing reports due to the Covid lockdown. This plan set out how we would work with partners to tackle the issues of domestic abuse during lockdown periods. It is anticipated that the rise in reporting of domestic abuse will continue as the Covid restrictions are eased. During 2020/21 domestic abuse incidents reported to Dorset Police were 22% higher than in the previous year.
11. The Community Safety Partnership Covid Response Plan for Domestic Abuse set out:
  - how services were quickly adapted to continue to provide support for victims and perpetrators,
  - a communications plan for ensuring appropriate messaging was going out to communities
  - work to manage risk in the criminal justice system
  - how we would provide safe accommodation during the lockdowns
12. The new Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy builds on this plan. The ambitious vision set out in this new strategy is that “no resident living within or visiting Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole should live in fear of, or experience domestic abuse.”
13. The Community Safety Partnership aims to achieve this by:
  - Preventing violence and abuse through a commitment to working to develop a “whole family, whole picture” approach across all our services
  - A commitment to commissioning improved services for victims, perpetrators and children impacted by domestic abuse to ensure we have services in place that are effective in assessing and responding to multiple needs
  - A commitment to working collaboratively to reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse
  - Responding to perpetrators by supporting criminal justice agencies in pursuing them through the criminal justice system and a commitment to challenging and changing the behaviour of perpetrators through the availability of domestic abuse perpetrator programmes

14. The Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Community Safety Partnership is responsible for and committed to ensuring the successful delivery of the Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy through the identified delivery plans and its ambitious commitments to change. It is acknowledged that whilst the vision for the strategy references visitors to the BCP area, some Council services will only be accessible to residents.
15. The strategy and the delivery plan will be implemented and monitored by the BCP Domestic Abuse Strategic Group, which will report into the BCP Community Safety Partnership.
16. The BCP Community Safety Partnership is interlinked with the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board and the Safeguarding Children's Partnership, where Domestic Abuse are also key priorities.

### **Development of the Delivery Plan**

17. The Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy Delivery Plan can be found at appendix 2.
18. The strategy outlines our commitment to work with a range of partners across the statutory, corporate, community and voluntary sectors as well as service users, to drive the strategy forward. With the support of the Domestic Abuse Strategy group, the Community Safety Partnership completed a series of task and finish groups responsible for supporting the development of a comprehensive delivery plan.
19. In parallel to the task and finish groups a public consultation was launched and supported by the BCP Council Consultation team. The consultation which was live for a period of four weeks received some focused feedback on a range of issues. The key themes arising from the consultation include:
  - The lack of specialist services for children and young people
  - Consistency in service provision across the BCP locality
  - Information Sharing between key agencies
  - Knowledge and skills of front-line staff
  - Perpetrator interventions both within and outside the criminal justice system
  - Promotion of services for victims
20. The consultation feedback has been cross referenced with the draft delivery plan and the plan has been enhanced to incorporate appropriate gaps. The Delivery Plan is a living document and will be updated quarterly as projects develop.
21. An All Member Workshop was held in March 2021 where the commitments from the strategy, the public consultation findings and the draft delivery plan actions were presented. Members were asked to consider whether the delivery plan met the scale of our ambitions as set out in the strategy. Feedback from the briefing has since been cross referenced against the plan and appropriate gaps identified have been incorporated.
22. Subsequently the Delivery Plan has been ratified by the BCP Domestic Abuse Strategy Group, a sub-group of the Community Safety Partnership, at its' meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

## **Domestic Abuse Bill 2021**

23. In 2018 the Government began an extensive consultation process for the provision of a new Domestic Abuse Bill.
24. The consultation set out the government's approach to dealing with domestic abuse. It sought to address domestic abuse from prevention through to rehabilitation. The consultation focused on four specific categories: promoting awareness; protect and support; pursue and deter and improve performance.
25. The Bill is expected to receive Royal Assent sometime in April 2021.
26. The Domestic Abuse Bill introduces a new statutory duty on tier one local authorities, ensuring that all victims, including children, have access to safety and support within safe accommodation when they need it.
27. Although Royal Assent may not be in place for 1 April, it is MHCLG's expectation that from 1 April 2021, Local Authorities should start to fulfil their relevant functions as if the new duty were in force, and continue to fulfil these functions in line with the duty once it is commenced (subject to Parliamentary approval).
28. The Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy and Delivery Plan addresses the requirements of the new duties as well as the local needs identified through the development of the strategy and plan.

## **Summary of financial implications**

29. BCP Council currently commissions specialist domestic abuse services to a value to £426,000 per year, providing 2 refuges and an Outreach service supporting victims of domestic abuse and their children. This places BCP Council as a tier one authority in a good position to fulfil the new statutory duty.
30. The Council also has a specifically earmarked reserves for domestic abuse projects which can be used to deliver this Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy. In particular this will fund the Up2U Perpetrator programme, which was previously funded through a Home Office grant, as well as ensuring there is capacity within services for victims in order to meet any raised demand due to the Covid pandemic.
31. The Government also recently announced a Domestic Abuse Capacity Building Fund which aims to help ensure local authorities can undertake early planning and preparation work ahead of implementation of the new duty. This fund will be allocated equally across Tier 1 local authorities in England, at £50,000 each. For BCP Council a proportion of the fund is allocated to independent housing needs analysis for victims of domestic abuse, in order to ensure that the current provision meets current and future needs. Alongside this, the grant will provide additional capacity within the Community Safety team to prepare for the implementation of new duty and this BCP Strategy.
32. In addition, the Government recently announced as part of the imminent Domestic Abuse Bill that each tier one Local Authority will be allocated with a share of £125 million duty funding for 2021/22,  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/funding-allocation-methods-new-domestic-abuse-duty>.

33. The allocation for BCP Council for 2021/22 is £750,257. In March 2021 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) set out a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalise the working relationship and expectations relating to the spend of the local authority's allocated funding. The grant only covers revenue expenditure relating to the functions set out in the new statutory duty (within the Domestic Abuse Bill) on Tier 1 Local Authorities relating to the provision of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children. For clarity this proposed spend is in addition to the £426,000 in base budget currently used to provide refuge and outreach services.

34. In order to meet the new duty and to support the delivery of the Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy, including meeting the increased demand due to the Covid pandemic, it is proposed that this new MHCLG funding is allocated as below:

Alternative Accommodation needs – temporary accommodation for victims of domestic abuse	245,000
Additional Outreach support to meet increased demand	90,000
Domestic Abuse Specialist Practitioner service – supporting victims with complex needs	60,000
Specialist support to children and young people	70,000
Health Advocacy Service – providing a Domestic Abuse Advocate service with the 2 hospitals	60,000
Provision of Domestic Abuse training to the BCP workforce	35,000
Up2U Post and Clinical Oversight – an additional perpetrator programme officer	100,000
DA Strategy Implementation – to include publicity campaigns and support for the commissioning of new services for April 2022	90,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£750,000</b>

35. This allocation would enable BCP to meet the increased demand for both support for victims and their families and perpetrator work as the Covid lockdown restrictions ease. Whilst there have been some indications that this funding may be an annual allocation which is repeated in future years, there is currently no confirmation of this from MHCLG. It is prudent therefore to treat this as one-off funding at this stage. If the funding is not allocated in future years, then the crucial elements of the projects listed above will be addressed through the co-commissioning of integrated services for victims and perpetrators from April 2022, which will be partially funded from our ear-marked reserves for domestic abuse services.

### **Summary of legal implications**

36. The Domestic Abuse Bill 2020 is in its final stages of receiving Royal Assent. The Bill includes a new duty on tier 1 local authorities to assess the need for and commission support to victims and their children in domestic abuse safe accommodation in England. It is anticipated that the new duty will come into force in April 2021.

37. Alongside this duty for local authorities, the Domestic Abuse Bill will:
- Create a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, coercive or controlling, and the inclusion of economic abuse. The inclusion of economic abuse will relate to any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on someone's ability to (a) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or (b) obtain goods or services.
  - Provide that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have 'priority need' for homelessness assistance.
  - Provide for a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Domestic Abuse Protection Order.
  - Prohibit perpetrators of abuse from cross-examining their victims in person in the civil and family courts in England and Wales.
  - Create a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal, civil and family courts.
  - Place the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme ("Clare's law") on a statutory footing.
  - Non-Fatal strangulation will become a new offence.

### **Summary of human resources implications**

38. The consideration of capacity within Community Safety and Domestic Abuse services will need to be considered as part of the delivery plan for the strategy. The strategy and plan highlight a number of potential gaps in service, which will impact on existing capacity. The additional domestic abuse duty funding will address these issues, and the allocation of this funding may include temporary recruitment of staff within contracted services.

### **Summary of public health implications**

39. The health impacts of domestic abuse vary, they may be physical and or psychological, both short and or long term. The new strategy and delivery plan alongside the new Bill will ensure the provision of adequate services to support victims and their families, ultimately positivity improving their long-term public health outcomes.
40. Research has evidenced the impact domestic abuse can have on children and young people resulting in Adverse Childhood Experiences. According to the Centre for Disease Control<sup>1</sup>, ACEs can include violence, abuse, and growing up in a family with mental health or substance use problems. Toxic stress from ACEs can change brain development and affect how the body responds to stress. ACEs are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse in adulthood.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aces/index.html>

Preventing ACEs could reduce the number of adults with depression by as much as 44%.

41. The provision of the duties will play a role in the prevention of domestic abuse by identifying the early signs within relationships and families, providing adequate support services and interventions as well as the provision of safe accommodation for victims who face a high risk of threat and harm.
42. The Community Safety Partnership is keen to take a Public Health approach to tackling Serious Violence. This includes defining the problem, determining the causes and determining what works in order to design, implement and evaluate intervention.
43. Tackling domestic abuse therefore has direct beneficial outcomes for the public health of our communities.

### **Summary of equality implications**

44. A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for the Strategy and Delivery Plan, which is summarised below.
45. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone, one in four women and one in six men will experience domestic abuse during their lifetime. However, the risks of serious harm are not spread evenly. Women are at much more risk of serious violence, and those with long-term health conditions, disabilities or mental health conditions at highest risk. Similarly abuse of parents by children is more commonly experienced by mothers than fathers and is more common among single parents.
46. Gay and bisexual men experience more domestic abuse compared to those in heterosexual relationships.
47. Intersectionality is defined as an analytical framework for understanding how aspects of a person's social and political identities combine to create different modes of discrimination and privilege. Examples of these aspects include gender, caste, sex, race, class, sexuality, religion, disability, physical appearance and height. Intersectionality identifies multiple factors of advantage and disadvantage<sup>2</sup>.
48. When tackling domestic abuse taking an intersectional approach in the provision of our services will aid in the mitigation of unconscious bias, aiming to address and prevent inequality.

### **Summary of risk assessment**

49. The risks of not implementing a strategy to tackle domestic abuse, include the risk in not fulfilling the new statutory duty, which will be placed on tier one local authorities, but they go much wider and deeper than this. Domestic abuse has a wide-ranging impact on public services across multiple agencies. If we do not improve our response to domestic abuse the risks include more children needing to be taken into care, more demand on emergency and social housing, increased demand on health services and mental health in particular.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intersectionality>

## **Background papers**

50. References for the report are as follows and can be accessed using the links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/funding-allocation-methods-new-domestic-abuse-duty>.

<https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aces/index.html>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intersectionality>

## **Appendices**

1. BCP CSP Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy
2. BCP CSP Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy Delivery Plan
3. Equalities Impact Assessment