


|  |  |
|--|--|
|   | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>EXECUTIVE</b><br/>10<sup>th</sup> October 2005</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Report from Director of<br/>Policy and Regeneration</b></p> |
| For Action   | Wards Affected:<br>ALL   |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>London Borough of Brent Domestic Violence Corporate Strategy 2005- 2008 and London Borough of Brent Domestic Violence Corporate Manual 2005-2008</b></p> |  |

Forward Plan Ref: PRU-05/06-07

## 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The London Borough of Brent Domestic Violence Corporate Strategy together with the London Borough of Brent Domestic Violence Corporate Manual sets out the Council's strategic intent in relation to this crime.
- 1.2 The draft Domestic Violence Strategy document and Manual document were disseminated as one document for internal consultation between 5<sup>TH</sup> August- 24<sup>th</sup> August 2005 and amendments to its format have been made

## 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive adopts Appendix A as the London Borough of Brent's Domestic Violence Corporate Strategy 2005-2008, and Appendix B as the London Borough of Brent Domestic Violence Corporate Manual 2005-2008 subject to any minor amendments officers may need to make
- 2.2 The Executive notes and supports the recommendations for action to be taken by individual Council Departments and senior officers in order to make the strategy effective.

### 3.0 Detail

3.1 Domestic violence continues to be a key national and local priority reflected by the Domestic Violence: Crime and Victims Act 2004; The London Domestic Violence Strategy 2001; and more recently the National Domestic Violence Reduction Delivery Plan (March 2005). The strategy document Appendix A seeks to support the five key priorities of the Delivery Plan which are:-

- Reducing the prevalence of domestic violence
- Increasing the rate that domestic violence is reported
- Increasing the rate of domestic violence offences that are brought to justice
- Ensuring victims of domestic violence are adequately protected and supported nationwide
- Reducing the number of domestic violence related homicides

3.2 This strategy is in response to evidenced local demand: In 2001 the London Borough of Brent commissioned Gill Hague to examine the extent of Domestic Violence in Brent and the effectiveness of policy development and service provision. This report highlighted the need for a Domestic violence strategy and policy to be embedded and integrated in partnership work and in all relevant strategic plans to enable joined-up work and co-ordination.

3.3 The proposed documents are the first of their kind in Brent. They demonstrate service excellence, comply with legal duties and meet government targets to fulfil corporate responsibilities. Their implementation will ensure consistency of response across the council to both clients and staff who experience this crime.

3.4 The strategy document contains the following information:

- Introduction
- Strategic direction
- Strategic recommendations

The manual document contains the following information:

- Introduction to theoretical framework
- Policy
- Guidelines
- Central Human Resources and Diversity
- Appendices
  - Legal framework
  - Role of partner agencies
  - Brent Domestic Violence Forum
  - Contacts

3.5 Strategic Recommendations are separated into service areas and relate to:

- Training;
- Publicity;
- Information sharing;

- Increased service provision;
  - Data collection;
  - Recording information/Collecting Evidence;
  - Responding to those with Complex Needs;
  - Proactive Identification/ Early Intervention;
  - Joint Multi Agency Working;
  - Signposting/ referral to Specialist service;
  - Consultation;
  - Appointment of leads for domestic violence within each service area.
- 3.6 The recommendations fall in line with those detailed in the Brent Crime, Disorder and Misuse of Drugs Strategy 2005-2008. Heads of Departments will be required to prioritise the recommendations and set targets for implementation.
- 3.7 The Community Safety team will produce an executive summary which, along with the full document, will be placed on Brain.
- 3.8 The Domestic Violence Operational Forum situated under the Crime Prevention Strategy Group will have responsibility for performance management of the strategy.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 Many departments currently spend a significant amount of their resources on domestic violence but because this is not always separately monitored, they remain unaware of the substantial cost implications they currently incur.
- 4.2 There are no additional financial implications, as costs will be borne through a combination of existing resources and external funding.
- 4.3 In the event that external funding can not be obtained or existing resources diminish progress towards the recommendations may be delayed.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The legal requirements governing the Council's response to domestic violence will vary depending on the service area involved and the circumstances of each case. General guidance on the legal context has been set out in the draft document attached at Appendix B.
- 5.2 Once adopted, the Council will be expected to comply with the strategy, and manual, any failure to do so could result in exposure to judicial review and other liability.

#### **6.0 Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 Equalities, particularly the needs of vulnerable communities, are recognised as a cross cutting issue, which has implications across the whole of the strategy.

6.2 The recommendations outlined within the strategy document and manual will assist the Council to provide more tailored services to survivors and their children. In particular greater co-ordination of front line staff responses will ensure that referrals to specialist services are increased and consistently offered.

6.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out in conjunction with officers from the Corporate Diversity Team

### **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)**

7.1 A member of staff will have additional responsibility in each department to lead on domestic violence. This staff member will require additional training.

7.2 As a result of the guidelines highlighted in Chapter 4 of Appendix B of staff who experience domestic violence may require reasonable security improvements to be made to their workspace to guard against attacks in the workplace, or may need to be relocated to an alternative building.

### **Background Papers**

Appendix A - The London Borough of Brent Domestic Violence Corporate Strategy 2005-2008

Appendix B – The London Borough of Brent Domestic Violence Corporate Manual 2005-2008

### **Contact Officers**

Helen Oliver  
Senior Community Safety Officer  
London Borough of Brent  
Community Safety Team  
Quality House  
249 Willesden Lane, London NW2 5JH

Director of Policy and Regeneration  
Phil Newby