

Equalities Impact Assessment

EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

POLICY/PROPOSAL:	Authority to tender contract for Domestic Abuse Advocacy, family support and one-stop shop services
DEPARTMENT:	Assistant Chief Executive
TEAM:	Community Safety and Prevent
LEAD OFFICER:	Davina Smith / Kibibi Octave
DATE:	22/06/22

SECTION A – INITIAL SCREENING

1. Please provide a description of the policy, proposal, change or initiative, and a summary its objectives and the intended results.

Proposal to procure a specialist Domestic Abuse advocacy (Independent domestic violence advocacy - IDVA), family support and one-stop shop services. This report requests approval to invite tenders in respect of specialist services to support medium and high-risk victim/survivors of Domestic Abuse.

The current delivery contract is due to come to end following the final contract extension period. There is also now a greater focus nationally and over the years on Domestic abuse (DA) and the wider Violence against women and girls, Brent has retained this as a key strategic priority within their Safer Brent Community Safety Strategy. National Policy and legislation will be incorporated to ensure we meet compliance including reference to the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act, 2021, the publication of the government's national Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy, 2021 to 2024.

Following consultation with the key funders who have committed initially to maintain core funding levels and with Community Protection increasing its contribution the Local authority would seek to invite tenders to apply to deliver services in a borough which wishes to ensure that victim survivors have access to key support when most in need.

Wider public, partner consultations and data analytics, have also created an enhanced understanding of local need to support service specification and design. To ensure future delivery will continue to protect medium and high-risk victim / survivors of DA.

The current contract following the final variation will continue until 1st March 2023, following a comprehensive open market tendering process we will appoint a new provider (a period of mobilisation will be incorporated to ensure safe transition).

2. Who may be affected by this policy or proposal?

Any person residing, working or visiting Brent Borough who are a victim of Domestic Abuse (DA). The provision of services are to provide specialist services to support medium and high risk victim/survivors of Domestic Abuse, family support and one-stop shop delivery. Therefore access to services will prioritise Brent residents, With victims/survivors experiencing domestic abuse assessed as standard risk the Provider will work with Brent partner agencies to ensure support is provided to “low” risk victims where need is identified. Non-Brent residents or where no identified connection exists the victim survivor will be referred to their local DA services. Any Brent residents whom are housed out of the Borough in refuge will still have access to support from the local provider.

3. Is there relevance to equality and the council’s public sector equality duty? Please explain why. If your answer is no, you must still provide an explanation.

Yes, we undertake regular monitoring and collation of data relating to equality as part of the contract including gender, disability, sexuality, ethnicity, and age (with particular interest in young victims and perpetrators). The advocacy service are monitored on their ability to deliver effective services to specialist BME victims, and to link in with other local specialist partners to facilitate this. Equality considerations will be taken at all stages of procurement and services specification and design.

Reported Domestic Abuse disproportionately affects female victims, to which the services recognise the need to provide a tailored model of delivery to meet their needs. We will be seeking a provider who is also able to offer Male victims of Domestic abuse support and or access to male victim services. The current provider offers support to all genders and does not exclude access; we will ensure that this key element to accessing support is retained in the next procurement of services.

We will be seeking a provider who is able to addresses, remove or minimize disadvantages connected to a characteristic of a protected group; take steps to meet the needs of protected groups; and to encourage participation of protected groups in public life also to take reasonable steps to remove any barriers for disabled victim / survivors. Further consideration will be made to ensure an intersectional approach is provided.

The effect of commissioning a Domestic abuse support service will ensure that independent bespoke and tailored support can be provided to Medium and high-risk victim survivors to help reduce and remove repeat victimisation. Protected characteristics are known to be a key element in understanding any trends or gaps in provision to address a need for a

vulnerable group. Therefore collating key data / including protected characteristics is required.

4. Please indicate with an “X” the potential impact of the policy or proposal on groups with each protected characteristic. Carefully consider if the proposal will impact on people in different ways because of their characteristics.

Authority to tender contract for Domestic Abuse Advocacy, family support and one-stop shop services

Characteristic	Impact Positive	Impact Neutral/None	Impact Negative
Age	x		
Sex	x		
Race	x		
Disability *	x		
Sexual orientation	x		
Gender reassignment	x		
Religion or belief	x		
Pregnancy or maternity	x		
Marriage	x		

5. Please complete **each row** of the checklist with an “X”.

Screening Checklist

	YES	NO
Have you established that the policy or proposal <i>is</i> relevant to the council’s public sector equality duty?	x	
Does the policy or proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?	x	
Would the policy or proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?		x
Has the potential for negative or positive equality impacts been identified with this policy or proposal?	x	

If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, then proceed to section B.

If you have answered NO to ALL of the above, then proceed straight to section D.

SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

1. Outline what information and evidence have you gathered and considered for this analysis. If there is little, then explain your judgements in detail and your plans to validate them with evidence. If you have monitoring information available, include it here.

5 in 100 adults (2.3 million), aged 16 to 74, say they have experienced domestic abuse in the 12 months prior according to the Crime Survey for England and Wales March 2020. Over a million women and 700,000 men experienced some form of domestic abuse including violence, stalking and emotional abuse that year. 214 women were killed by their partner or ex-partner in between year ending 2018 - 2020. SafeLives estimates that there are 116,059 victims at high risk of serious harm or murder and 143,673 children living with these (between July 2020 – June 2021).

Brent Council is committed to the reduction of Domestic Abuse, Sexual abuse, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) through working in partnership to enable a coordinated community response to these issues. There is a recognised strategic priority in the Safer Brent Community Safety Strategy (2018-2021/ 2022) to address all forms of domestic and sexual violence. The Police and Crime Plan sets out the Mayor's priorities for 2021-2025 showing some key areas, which include making, London a city in which women and girls are safer and feel safer. The new strategy will combine effective action against perpetrators; high quality support for victims and survivors; and taking a public health approach to identify and address the underlying causes of VAWG.

There remains an existing pressure in the current service to meet the demand for service support. In the year ending March 2021, 1,431 medium and high-risk victims and survivors of domestic abuse were offered support and intervention from Advance Services. This figure includes 164 adult victims referred into the Family Support projects and 78 children referred to the Children and Young Person's Support Worker. This figure also includes 264 victims and survivors who were supported by the Chrysalis One Stop Shop. In order to address the high demand for services we hope the new specification will provide the flexibility for the new provider to work creatively to address the needs and accessing wider partnership support and interventions.

The current Provider and its staff are expected to work in co-operation and liaise with all key partner agencies to ensure a completely family approach is devised and delivered to safeguard and reduce risk. There were 1104 cases in year, which have received IDVA support, (2021/2022), and during this period, there were 772 MARAC cases.

Advance - Brent 2021-2022 Monitoring Report Figures;

TOTAL Received Referrals (incl. duplicate & mis-referrals)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Cumulative
Core IDVA	200	233	212	256	901
Early Help	21	17	23	26	87
Social Care	13	12	3	7	35
CYP	36	15	12	18	81
Totals	270	277	250	307	1104

The continued increase in recorded sexual and domestic abuse offences is not necessarily a reflection of more offences taking place but may reflect victims having more knowledge of reporting procedures. **6271 Domestic Abuse Incidents and Sexual Offences were reported to police in 2020 in Brent.** We are aware that these are hidden crimes; the real numbers will be far greater as there are many unreported incidents. It is estimated that only 18% of female victims of partner abuse and 15% of all sexual abuse victims report their experiences to the police.

In addition, the Community Safety Service will continue to lobby MOPAC and the Home Office to seek more localised support and funding to enhance delivery. Future variation and uplift in funding will be sought.

There is a plethora of evidence that supports early intervention and the longer-term financial benefits to the public purse. SafeLives also highlights that for every £1 spent on an IDVA and MARAC intervention, £6 of public money is saved and that one high risk victim who does not receive intervention resulting in murder costs the public sector £1.2m

“Safelives analysis shows that IDVAs and MARAC interventions save on average of at least £6,100 of these costs per high risk victim. MARACs and related IDVA intervention would only have to be successful in 16% of cases to pay for themselves.”¹

The authority to tender will include commissioning; **Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA)**. There is a growing evidence base demonstrating the effectiveness of IDVAs on stopping or reducing the level of abuse after intensive support from an IDVA Services including multiple interventions. These include a multi-site evaluation of IDVAs (Howarth, Stimpson et al 2009); a systematic review (Warburton and Feder 2009) concluding intensive advocacy for women recruited in shelters or refuges reduced physical abuse up to two years post intensive intervention. The wider use and access to IDVA support for Medium and high-risk cases to ensure that victims have a consistent response from statutory services to support their recovery and reduce risk.

Chrysalis – One stop shop pre pandemic delivered between October 2019 – March 2020 the following outputs and outcomes

- 25 drop-in service sessions were provided

¹ Safe Lives (2010), Saving Lives, Saving Money: MARACs and high risk domestic abuse, http://www.safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Saving_lives_saving_money_FINAL_REFERENCED_VERSION.pdf

- 180 sessions with professionals took place
- 121 survivors were supported to access services relevant to their needs.
- 89% of survivors felt confident in knowing how and when to access support compared to intake
- 83% of all survivors who answered the question were aware of 1 or more relevant support services after attending the OSS
- 91% of survivors who report that if they were aware a service like the One-Stop-Shop existed sooner, it would have encouraged them to seek support earlier
- 92% of survivors who report they would recommend the OSS to a friend
- 33% of survivors who attended the OSS on more than one occasion

The support provided is free, confidential and available to all Brent residents over 16 years old. Support is available:

- Over the phone,
- Via video (Skype, WhatsApp, FaceTime, Zoom),
- In other languages if English is not a first language
- And Face to face drop in

The delivery of the Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (DA MARAC) will be delivered in house. Retaining and coordinating the partnership.

2. For each “protected characteristic” provide details of all the potential or known impacts identified, both positive and negative, and explain how you have reached these conclusions based on the information and evidence listed above. Where appropriate state “not applicable”.

AGE

<p>Details of impacts identified</p>	<p>With the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, children are also now included as victims. Therefore the current proposal will ensure that an IDVA is co-located within our Children social care services to offer support and specialist advice where Domestic abuse is identified in the household. The family support worker in the current model also offers an intervention model that provides direct support for children and their non-abusive primary carer, preventing the long-term trauma, and providing a range of positive outcomes for children. It recognises children as also being victims and supports children’s school attendance, promotes their mental well-being, and their physical and other aspects of safety, helping to reduce and prevent future domestic abuse. There is no upper age limit for services and providers are required to ensure that agencies working with older and younger people are aware of the services offered.</p> <p>There are fewer victim / survivors over 60 who meet the threshold for medium and high risk as assessed by the CAADA DASH Risk</p>
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	<p>Assessment form, therefore access to the existing victim support services funded through MOPAC will remain. Adult Social Care have discussed the need to consider a specialist adviser; however funding was not available at this point to explore this further and will be reviewed.</p>
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DISABILITY

<p>Details of impacts identified</p>	<p>Women with disabilities are more likely to experience domestic violence and abuse than women without and over a longer period of time, suffering more severe injuries as a result of the violence. The proportion of Brent MARAC cases involving victims with a disability in the 12 months to September 2021 was 8.2%, compared to 7.0% in 2020. However, this remains lower than the estimated population of 19%, based on the Family Resources Survey 2018-19 which identifies that almost 1 in 5 of the working age population (16-64 years) is disabled.</p> <p>The service provider is required to ensure services are provided at venues and in such a way as to be accessible to disabled people. Services are required to ensure that agencies supporting disabled people are aware of the services on offer, which can be achieved through the general domestic abuse awareness as well as MARAC and risk assessment training. In 2020/21 this training was delivered to more than 280 front line practitioners and professionals. We will include such training within the new contract specification; Information about the services will be made available in formats for people with a range of disabilities.</p>
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RACE

<p>Details of impacts identified</p>	<p>Brent remains as one of the most diverse borough in London and as such, services, which deliver in the area, must ensure that they are able to meet the needs of the community.</p> <p>The proportion of Brent MARAC cases where the victim is Black, Asian or racially minoritised in the 12 months to September 2021 was 16.4%, compared to 15.9% in 2020. However, this remains lower than the national population rate of 18.1%. These statistics are likely to change once the Census is published by the ONS in 2022.</p>
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SEX

<p>Details of impacts identified</p>	<p>For further context around Domestic Abuse and violence against women and girls within Brent, looking at our data of recorded crime with the police, in the last 12 months (November 2020 to October 2021); Brent recorded 695 sexual offences, an increase of 13% on the same period in the previous year. This increase is to be expected as the previous 12- month period included periods of lockdown. In the last 12 months (November 2020 to October 2021), Brent recorded 3518 domestic abuse offences, a 1% increase compared with the previous 12 months. Long-term, recorded domestic abuse offences have increased year on year since 2010/11, while the proportion of these where the victim-sustained injury has decreased each year.</p>
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SEXUAL ORIENTATION

<p>Details of impacts identified</p>	<p>Services are offered to all victim/ survivors women and men, however where they may choose not to engage, the provider will seek to provide details of other gender or specialist service.</p> <p>Data continues to highlight that women remain the highest identified victims.</p> <p>Close monitoring of the successful provider will ensure that we can meet the needs and in same sex relationship, this flexibility will ensure that the identified victim survivor is receiving the support needed without having to be labelled.</p>
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PREGANCY AND MATERNITY

<p>Details of impacts identified</p>	<p>Domestic abuse within Pregnancy is a high risk factor, Midwifery and Health services are trained to identify concerns and seek support early. We have previously obtained funding through the Home Office transformation fund to deliver IDVA hospital based support within Northwick Park Hospital. The services was widely valued, however was not sustained following the end of the contract.</p> <p>We locally have now received funding to support primary care practitioners through access to the IRIS (Identification and Referral to Improve Safety) project. This provides another opportunity to work with health partners to intervene early, safeguard and refer on to support. Data is discussed quarterly including reviewing service progress. As of Jan 2022, all 54 practices have been approached and are aware of the IRIS service with 38 practices successfully engaging in either being trained, registered for training, or shown an interest. Overall, 12 fully trained practices and 8 partially trained practices, 80% of the VRU (Violence Reduction Unit) target for fully trained practices achieved.</p>
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RELIGION OR BELIEF

Details of impacts identified	Please note Forced marriage below, and the wider domestic abuse risk, which an individual may have experienced. The role of an IDVA would provide specialist support and coordination with professionals to ensure the victim is safeguarded and protected. Religion or beliefs can affect the relationship and as such are a cause for concern. Honour based violence is an example of serious cultural views and practice which can lead to death and Other misogynistic views can include domestic abuse.
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GENDER REASSIGNMENT

Details of impacts identified	Services are offered to all victim/ survivors, however where they may choose not to engage, the provider will seek to provide details of other gender or specialist service e.g. Galop
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MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

Details of impacts identified	In June 2014, forcing someone to marry against their will, became a criminal offence. It also applies to UK nationals overseas who are at risk of becoming the victim of a forced marriage. The breach of a Forced Marriage Protection Order (FMPO) is a criminal offence with a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine.
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3. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

No

4. Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal and is further engagement required?

Participants in the wider consultation began from 2021 and were representative of the community, partners and victim survivor.

5. Please detail any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

Limited details of LGBTQ+ victims and if they know where to go or who to speak with. The current provider is seeking further information from Galop.

6. If, following your action plan, negative impacts will or may remain, please explain how these can be justified?

Any remaining negative impacts will be addressed through contract monitoring review.

7. Outline how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

Overall, the new service specifications should have a positive impact on protected groups because its implementation will be, strengthen and formalise the ways in which equality will be built into service delivery. This will be achieved in the following ways;

- Clear performance and monitoring framework
- Independent scrutiny and selected audit review
- Accountability of practice delivery to the VAWG Forum
- Service user feedback and or case study will be required as part of contract monitoring.
- Commissioner and provider will give ongoing due regard to all protected characteristics.

SECTION C - CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis above, please detail your overall conclusions. State if any mitigating actions are required to alleviate negative impacts, what these are and what the desired outcomes will be. If positive equality impacts have been identified, consider what actions you can take to enhance them. If you have decided to justify and continue with the policy despite negative equality impacts, provide your justification. If you are to stop the policy, explain why.

SECTION D – RESULT

Please select one of the following options. Mark with an “X”.

A	CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED	X
B	JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
C	CHANGE / ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
D	STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	

SECTION E - ACTION PLAN

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impacts (or increase the positive); monitor actual or ongoing impacts; plan reviews and any further engagement or analysis required.

Action	Expected outcome	Officer	Completion Date
Further understanding of the needs of LGBTQ+ victim survivors	Greater insight to service demand and local unmet need.	Violence and Vulnerability Coordinator (DA, VAWG)	12 months
Embed the wider understanding of cultural and racial barriers for black victims / survivors.	An improved understanding of the intersectional approaches required and devising alternative routes to increase reporting	Violence and Vulnerability Coordinator (DA, VAWG)	12 months
Review annually TOR for all Domestic abuse partnership boards	To ensure the key partners are present and the focus of the group is clear.	Violence and Vulnerability Coordinator (DA, VAWG)	12 months
Ensure data collection and analysis, including implementation of any actions and updates of action plans pay due regard to equality impact	Data driven actions are embedded in the core focus of equality and access.	Community Safety Manager / Violence and Vulnerability Coordinator (DA, VAWG)	12 months

SECTION F – SIGN OFF

Please ensure this section is signed and dated.

OFFICER:	Davina Smith – Community Safety Manager
REVIEWING OFFICER:	Kibibi Octave – Head of Community Safety and Prevent
HEAD OF SERVICE / Operational Director:	Kibibi Octave – Head of Community Safety and Prevent