



Hackney Domestic and Gender Violence Strategy

2011-2013

“Hackney is committed to working to tackle domestic violence along with our partner organisations.”

Mayor Jules Pipe, Mayor’s Manifesto, May 2010

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Foreword by Lead Cabinet Member, Councillor Sophie Linden

Overall in the UK, more than one in four women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime, often with years of psychological abuse.¹

The strength of this strategy is that it promotes a partnership approach. By setting out shared objectives and priorities, and identifying the areas that need further work, the strategy demonstrates the commitment that the Council and partners have made to work together to tackle violence against women, and support victims of domestic violence.

Progress has been made since the previous strategy. There has been an increase in reporting of domestic violence and the number of referrals to Hackney's Domestic Violence Team increased by 45% during 2009/10. New services and responses have been developed. These include the setting up of the Hackney Multi-Agency Conference (MARAC) - a structured forum where relevant agencies meet to agree a co-ordinated response for individuals assessed as being at the highest risk of domestic abuse - and the Thames Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC) which is both bringing offenders to justice swiftly and effectively, and supporting victims.

However, despite this positive progress, all partners recognise the need to continue to develop our response to domestic and gender violence.

This strategy sets out clearly what our approach will be to prioritise **prevention, provision, protection** and **prosecution**.

Prevention through awareness-raising; sending a clear message to potential perpetrators that domestic and gender violence will not be tolerated, and educating children and young people on domestic and gender violence.

¹ "Call to End Violence against Women and Girls" HM Government 2010

Provision focuses on the delivery of high quality support services for victims and their families, to ensure that those affected by domestic and gender violence are empowered to improve their safety and re-build their lives free from violence.

Effective partnership working and information sharing between agencies to meet the often complex needs of victims is key to the **protection** of domestic and gender violence victims. Finally, we are committed to **prosecuting** perpetrators and ensuring they are held accountable for their abusive actions.

Sophie Linden (Cllr)

Cabinet Member for Crime, Sustainability and Customer Services

Hackney's Domestic and Gender Violence Partnership is comprised of representatives from the following organisations:

- Hackney Council including Safeguarding Children and Adults, Youth Offending Service and Hackney Drug and Alcohol Action Team
- Hackney Police
- City and Hackney Primary Care Trust
- Voluntary and community organisations
- Accommodation based services
- The Learning Trust
- Hackney Homes (ALMO)
- Hackney Probation Service
- East London NHS Trust

Purpose of the strategy

“Hackney is committed to working to tackle domestic violence along with our partner organisations.” Mayor Jules Pipe, Mayor’s Manifesto, May 2010.

One of the aims of Hackney’s Safer Cleaner Partnership is:

To respond effectively to domestic and gender violence and work towards a borough where Hackney residents need no longer suffer as victims of such abuse.

The Hackney Safer Cleaner Partnership is committed to supporting victims of domestic violence using an Integrated Partnership Response² to ensure that all relevant agencies in the borough work together to:

- Prevent deaths from domestic violence.
- Reduce the wider risks associated with domestic and gender violence, including substance misuse, the risk associated with being a parent, unemployment, health, and educational attainment levels.
- Reduce rates of repeat victimisation through prevention.

The Hackney Domestic and Gender Violence Strategy sets targets for:

1. **Prevention:** to increase awareness of the extent and impact of domestic and gender violence across Hackney; to recognise the needs of children and young people whose lives are affected by domestic abuse; and to promote preventative approaches through early interventions.
2. **Provision:** to work in partnership to meet the needs of all victims in Hackney; to enable access to effective services, advice and support.

² (IPR) Model of domestic violence illustrates the inter-relationship of agencies and levels of response for tackling domestic violence. It recognises and makes explicit that no one agency can deal effectively and safely with the effects of domestic violence.

3. **Protection:** to provide support to all victims through the criminal and civil justice systems.
4. **Prosecution:** to bring more offenders to justice by improving reporting and conviction rates.

We are guided by the policy framework in the UK and London, as well as International and European directives such as Human Rights legislation. During the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995, Governments declared that "Violence against women constitutes a violation of basic human rights and is an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace".

Recognising and celebrating the ethnic diversity of Hackney's inhabitants is central to our strategy. Residents from white ethnic backgrounds make up 59.4% of Hackney's inhabitants³, and the borough has large Black African, Black Caribbean, Turkish-speaking, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot, and Orthodox Jewish communities as well as many other community groups. Our response to domestic and gender violence will take into account the diverse needs and experiences of its many communities.

Domestic abuse occurs across society, regardless of age, gender, race, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, wealth, geographical location, academic achievement or educational ability. We recognise that some communities may find it more difficult to leave than others, or may experience barriers to support. We will ensure that our response to domestic abuse meets the needs of everyone - irrespective of age, gender, race, class, culture, sexual orientation or disability.

Hackney also has a large lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. Domestic and gender violence does occur within LGBT relationships and Hackney is committed to providing services which meet the needs of these communities. It is also important to note that people with

³ LBH Community Safety Joint Strategic Assessment 2006-2007

disabilities are affected by domestic and gender violence. Disabled women are twice as likely to experience domestic violence as non-disabled women⁴.

⁴ British Crime Survey, 1995

1. Introduction

This strategy builds on the achievements of the previous Domestic and Gender Violence Strategy 2007-2010. Service users, service providers and strategic partners were consulted throughout the development of this strategy, to ensure the voices of domestic and gender violence victims and their children remain at the heart of this document.

Our action plan makes clear our commitment to maintaining and developing Hackney's Integrated Partnership Response approach to **prevention, provision, protection** and **prosecution** where domestic and gender violence occur.

1.1 Background

It is important to recognise that this strategy was written during a period of significant political change. The Home Office released a national strategy, *Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls* in November 2009, but this has since been archived as the current government develops a new strategy. In March 2010, The Mayor of London launched *The Way Forward - Taking action to end violence against women and girls*. This strategy takes an integrated approach to tackling domestic and gender violence, with the aim that "London will take a global lead in preventing and eliminating violence against women." These strategies address not only issues of domestic violence but also other forms of gender violence, including rape, sexual assault, honour based violence, forced marriage, trafficking and forced prostitution.

This strategy is also aligned with the following local strategies and plans:

- Hackney's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2018
- Hackney Community Safety Partnership Strategic Needs Assessment 2010/2011

- Mayor of Hackney's Manifesto Commitments
- City and Hackney Safeguarding Adult Board Action Plan
- City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Action Plan
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010
- City and Hackney Health and Wellbeing Profile (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment)

As a local authority, Hackney has a number of statutory duties in relation to the provision of domestic violence services:

- Under the **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**, Hackney Council has a statutory responsibility to work with other agencies to reduce crime and disorder in the local area. As domestic violence accounts for almost a fifth of all recorded violent crime, it should be included within local crime reduction strategies and action plans⁵.
- Under Section 177 of the Housing Act, as amended by the **Homelessness Act 2002**, a local authority has a responsibility to assess whether it is reasonable for an individual to continue to occupy accommodation. The Act states that it is not reasonable for a person to continue to occupy accommodation if it is probable that this will lead to domestic or other violence against them⁶.
- The government's **PSA Target 9** on gender equality has a sub-target 9 taking action to reduce domestic violence; the key performance indicator associated with this target is the number of arrests, but the government wants to see improved support to victims and a reduction in the incidences of domestic violence⁷.
- **Children's Act 2004** – Every Child Matters notes the impact that domestic violence has on the wellbeing of children and young people, although it does not include specific new provisions in this area⁸.

⁵ <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/22172>

⁶ <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/22220>

⁷ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/corporate/about/howwework/publicserviceagreements/publicserviceagreements200508/psa-notes/psa-target9/>

⁸ <http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-00331-2008.pdf>

- The **Gender Equality Duty** aims to tackle systemic discrimination and imposes a statutory duty on public authorities to promote gender equality, which includes tackling gender based violence⁹.
- The **Disability Discrimination Act 2005** promotes equality for disabled people¹⁰.
- The **Equality Act 2006** prohibits religion/belief discrimination and sexual orientation discrimination when providing goods, facilities and services¹¹.
- **The Equality Act 2010** provides a new cross-cutting legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all; to update, simplify and strengthen the previous legislation; and to deliver a simple, modern and accessible framework of discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

Effectively preventing or tackling domestic and gender violence will help achieve wider goals, including reducing unemployment, improving educational attainment and improving community cohesion. Domestic and gender violence is also a health issue. Reducing incidents of these types of violence will improve physical and mental health, prevent deaths from related incidents, reduce admissions to hospital, minimise the wider risks associated with domestic and gender violence, including substance misuse, and will ultimately enhance quality of life and well-being.

On a national scale, domestic and gender violence are widespread. For example, in cases of domestic violence:

- One in four women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime (Council of Europe, 2002).
- Two women per week in England and Wales are killed by a partner or former partner (Coleman et al, 2007).

⁹ http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/gender_equality_duty_vaw.pdf

¹⁰ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/13/contents>

¹¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/3/contents>

- Ten women per week commit suicide in the UK to escape domestic violence (Refuge, 2010).
- Only 24% of domestic violence is reported to the police in the UK (Walby and Allen 2004).
- Around half of all rapes are committed by a current or former partner (Kelly et al 2005).
- In the period January - September 2010 there were 69,324 incidents of domestic violence reported to the police in London. Of these incidents, 28,266, or 40%, went on to be charged as crimes¹².
- At least 750,000 children a year witness domestic violence (Department of Health, 2002). In approximately 70% of domestic violence incidents in Hackney, children are in the same or next room.
- Nearly three quarters of children on the 'at risk' register live in households where domestic violence occurs, and 52% of child protection cases involve domestic violence (Department of Health, 2002; Farmer and Owen, 1995).

The Home Office developed a Ready Reckoner Tool¹³ to enable boroughs to estimate the level of need, taking into account known levels of under-reporting. This tool tells us that in Hackney we can expect that:

- 5,245 women and girls aged 15-69 have been the victim of domestic violence in the past year.
- 5,687 women and girls aged 15-69 have been the victim of sexual abuse in the past year.
- 9,281 women and girls aged 15-69 have been the victim of stalking in the past year.

These figures are estimates only, but the tool is widely used by domestic and gender support agencies across the country to assess the level of local need. In the case of domestic violence specifically, there were 4,665 reports to

¹² Metropolitan Police Data 2010

¹³ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/about-us/news/violence-against-women-and-girls.html>

police in Hackney recorded 2009/10¹⁴. Considering that less than a quarter of domestic violence incidents are reported to the police¹⁵, and using the Home Office Ready Reckoner to assess the likely amount of incidents, this represents on average an 88% report rate for the borough. In 2011 so far (April-October inclusive) there have been 2,706 reports to the police.

The current population of Hackney stands at 215,987¹⁶. Hackney has the second highest rate of domestic violence reporting in London per 1,000 per population, when compared with the 9 most similar boroughs¹⁷. Referrals to Hackney’s Domestic Violence and Hate Crime Team increased by 45% during 2009/10.

In March 2010, Hackney Women’s Forum held focus groups with 86 women from various diverse community groups in the borough. The findings from these focus groups “demonstrated that violence against women is a persistent and ongoing problem. Focus group participants shared experiences and views about the nature and consequences of gender based violence and abuse in Hackney. Violence against women and girls were seen as not just a criminal justice issue but a public health problem and a violation of women’s human rights.”

Cost of domestic violence

The Home Office’s Ready Reckoner Tool estimates the following costs within Hackney alone:

Type of cost	Estimated level of cost
Physical & mental health care	£4,593,286
Criminal justice	£2,893,153
Social services	£544,837
Other incl. housing, civil law & employment	£13,284,679
Human & emotional	£68,057,513
Total excl. human / emotional	£21,315,955

¹⁴ Metropolitan Police Data 2010

¹⁵ Walby and Allen 2004

¹⁶ Hackney Chief Executive’s Directorate, Policy and Performance Team, June 2010

¹⁷ LBH Value for Money Review of Domestic Violence Services May 2010

The Hackney Safer Cleaner Partnership is committed to working towards ensuring that all victims of domestic and gender violence feel empowered to ask for support and assistance.

Hackney is committed to ensuring that local, dedicated domestic and gender violence support services for women and children continue to meet the complex needs of victims in every community. We will work with partner agencies to find new ways of working to ensure continued delivery of support services for victims.

Hackney welcomes the government's commitment to the *Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy* to help ensure the retention of domestic and gender violence specialist support services and a wide range of funding options.

This strategy seeks to contribute to a reduction in repeat incidents of domestic violence (as measured by National Indicator 32) and domestic violence murders (as measured by National Indicator 34). The Safer Cleaner Partnership will monitor the incidents of domestic violence reported to the police, and the percentage of reported domestic violence offences which result in sanctioned detections. Due to recent governmental changes these may later be subject to review, but there are no current proposals for change.

1.2 Definitions

Domestic and gender violence: This strategy builds on the approach of the Hackney Domestic and Gender Violence Strategy 2007-2010. Our definition of domestic and gender violence incorporates that of the Home Office but also includes violence against women, as defined by the Home Office and used in the Mayor of London's strategy, *The Way Forward*.

The main focus of this strategy is on domestic violence. However, the Partnership acknowledges that there are many other forms of gender violence for which **prevention, provision, protection** and **prosecution** measures must be put in place.

The Home Office defines domestic violence as:

“Any incident of threatening behaviour or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional), between adults* who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This includes issues of concern to black and minority ethnic communities such as so-called crimes of “honour”, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.”

*An adult is defined as any person aged 18 years of over. Family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister and grandparents whether directly related, in laws or stepfamily. However, 16-18 year olds living independently would be included if domestic violence is a feature of their life.

Violence against women

The UN defines violence against women as any act of ‘gender-based violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately’. The Mayor of London’s strategy extends this definition to include girls who are victims of violence.

Forms of violence against women

- ***Domestic / intimate partner violence*** – a pattern of coercive control, which includes combinations of physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse by a current or former partner. In extreme cases this includes murder.
- ***Female genital mutilation / cutting (FGM/C)*** – Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) involves the complete or partial removal or alteration of external genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is mostly carried out on young girls at some time between infancy and age 15 years. Unlike male circumcision, which is legal in many countries, it is now illegal across much of the globe, and its extensive harmful health consequences are widely recognised.

- **Forced marriage** – a marriage conducted without valid consent of one or both parties, where duress is a factor.
- **‘Honour’ based violence** – violence committed to protect or defend the ‘honour’ of a family and/or community. Women, especially young women, are the most common targets, often where they have acted outside community boundaries of perceived acceptable feminine / sexual behaviour. In extreme cases the woman may be killed.
- **Prostitution and trafficking** – where women and girls are forced, coerced or deceived on entry into prostitution and / or trafficking. Trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation and exploitation of women for the purposes of prostitution, across international borders and within countries (‘internal trafficking’). Cross-border trafficking also takes place for the purposes of domestic servitude.
- **Sexual violence including rape** – sexual contact without the consent of the woman / girl. Perpetrators range from total strangers to relatives and intimate partners, but most are known in some way. It can happen anywhere – in the family / household, workplace, public space, social settings, and during war / conflict situations.
- **Sexual harassment** - unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It can take place anywhere including the workplace, schools, streets, public transport and social situations. It includes flashing, obscene and threatening calls and online harassment.
- **Stalking** - repeated (i.e. on at least two occasions) harassment causing fear, alarm or distress. It can include threatening phone calls, texts or letters; damaging property; spying on and following the victim.

For the purposes of this strategy, the term “domestic and gender violence” will incorporate both the government definition of domestic violence and the definition of violence against women.

Standard and high risk

For the purposes of domestic and gender violence service provision in Hackney, the Partnership categorises the risk levels experienced by service users as either standard or high risk. This definition enables support agencies to refer and support clients more effectively through the appropriate services, therefore improving their safety. The Partnership uses the nationally-recognised CAADA¹⁸ tool to assess the risk level. However, all agencies must be aware that risk levels change regularly and a client's risk must be continually reassessed as part of good practice in domestic and gender violence provision.

Victim / survivor

Many service providers and service users feel that the term "victim" in cases of domestic and gender violence may have negative connotations and imply an element of passive resistance.

For this reason, some agencies and individuals use the term "survivor" instead. However, the use of the term "victim" here is used to clearly acknowledge that many forms of domestic and gender violence are actual criminal acts against which legal remedies can be sought.

1.3 Domestic and Gender Violence Strategy 2007-2010: What we achieved

This strategy builds on the successes of the Hackney Domestic and Gender Violence Strategy 2007-2010. Our achievements include:

- Development and co-ordination of the Hackney Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

¹⁸ Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) is a national charity supporting a strong multi-agency response to domestic abuse.

- Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), based within the voluntary sector. Around 1,000 high-risk victims are supported each year through the IDVA's and Domestic Violence and Hate Crime Team (DVHCT).
- Development of a Safer Homes Scheme which provides additional security measures for the homes of victims.
- Maintaining advocacy, advice and support services for male victims of domestic and gender violence.
- Implementation of routine enquiry into domestic violence at Homerton Hospital Maternity Units and a Consultant Midwife in post with a domestic violence remit. A Health Visitor with a special interest in domestic violence is also now in post.
- Strengthening of Hackney Domestic Violence Policy and Operations Group to increase information and networking exchange between agencies tackling domestic and gender violence.
- Support of the Thames Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC). Agencies across Tower Hamlets and Hackney work together to identify, fast-track and risk assess domestic violence cases, support victims and share information so that more offenders are brought to justice. The SDVC was launched in October 2009 and received national accreditation in February 2010.
- Children and Young People's Services' Partnership Triage Unit. The aim of the Triage Unit is to use information sharing, coupled with informed analysis from multiple agencies, to gain a balanced perspective on the risks facing children, young people and their families. The unit uses that perspective, where appropriate, to select the most appropriate service to carry out further assessment and intervention. There are strong links between Hackney's domestic violence services and the Triage Unit, so that cases can easily be sent to specialist agencies to support children and their families.
- Hackney's Domestic Violence and Hate Crime Team (DVHCT) has moved into joint premises with the Drug and Alcohol Action Team to create a Vulnerable Families Centre in recognition of the links between

domestic and gender violence and problematic use of drugs and alcohol. Home Office research from 2003 reveals that alcohol use was a feature in the majority of UK offences (62%) and almost half the sample of domestic violence perpetrators (48%) were alcohol dependent.

- Rape Crisis Provision. The Council and its partners are committed to supporting the introduction of the Pan-London Rape Crisis Centres, one of which is based in Hackney and will provide better support for victims of rape.

2. Underlying principles of the strategy

2.1 Domestic and gender violence as chosen behaviour

Perpetrators of domestic and gender violence make a choice to be violent. Domestic violence can be learned behaviour. However, the element of choice is key to our understanding of the root causes of domestic and gender violence.

There is never an excuse for domestic and gender violence; perpetrators choose to be violent as a way to exert power and control over the victim, regardless of their own childhood experiences. The responsibility for the violence lies solely with the perpetrator. Perpetrating domestic and gender violence is always a choice and it is always intentional.

Underlying principle 1: Perpetrators should have recognition of their behaviour and be held accountable.

2.2 Domestic and gender violence as a gendered issue

Awareness of the dynamics of domestic and gender violence is key to providing an effective response. Domestic and gender violence is a multi-generational problem, and is found in all socio-economic levels, religions, racial and ethnic backgrounds. It is experienced by both men and women and takes place within heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender relationships. It is also important to note that people of all ages experience domestic and gender violence. Many forms of domestic and gender violence are experienced by young women and girls, and older women can also be victims. The Partnership is committed to providing holistic services to men experiencing domestic and gender violence and holding perpetrators accountable, regardless of their gender.

However, for the purposes of this strategy we acknowledge that in 89% of domestic violence cases, the victim is female.¹⁹ A gender-neutral approach to domestic and gender violence could ultimately negatively impact our response to the issue, as gender neutrality fails to address the fact that male and female victims may experience domestic and gender violence differently - at least in part because of their gender - and they may have varying support needs as a result.

Underlying principle 2: Working together with women organisations to prevent, intervene and reduce the impact of domestic violence, increasing the safety and well being of those living with its effects in Hackney.

2.3 Domestic and gender violence as a human rights issue

“Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation, and it is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace.”²⁰ Perpetrators of domestic and gender violence contravene the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that “no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”

Underlying principle 3: Building on the previous strategy, future work should reflect the necessity for prevention and early intervention to reduce further harm and safeguard basic human rights. It should also continue to ensure services are accessible, and support and increase confidence in our joint ability to bring perpetrators to justice.

2.4 Hackney’s Integrated Partnership Response

An Integrated Partnership Response is the most effective approach to adopt when tackling domestic and gender violence in Hackney. This means that we

¹⁹ Walby and Allen 2004

²⁰ Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan

acknowledge that no one agency can address domestic and gender violence alone. Many victims of domestic and gender violence present with multiple needs. For example, women experiencing domestic violence are up to fifteen times more likely to misuse alcohol and up to nine times more likely to misuse substances than women who have not been victims of this type of violence.²¹ All the relevant agencies coming into contact with victims of domestic and gender violence and their children are committed to working together in partnership to provide holistic **prevention, protection, provision** and **prosecution** services that meet local need. We are committed to effectively co-ordinating this Integrated Partnership Response and we will continue to work to ensure that relevant service providers in the borough receive regular domestic and gender violence awareness training.

Underlying principle 4: To continue to improve the joint working between agencies, including information sharing, and establish robust structures to enable a co-ordinated approach.

2.5 Safety of the victim and their family as the top priority

The Partnership is committed to considering the safety of victims of domestic and gender violence as top priority. All relevant service providers are committed to supporting victims to remain as safe as possible. The specialist domestic and gender violence support agencies in Hackney use risk assessments and safety planning with victims accessing their support. The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board has responsibility for co-ordinating the activities of all agencies in relation to Child Protection and all are expected to work in accordance with the London Child Protection Procedures to ensure that children are appropriately safeguarded in situations where they are affected by domestic and gender violence. Hackney MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) works to improve the safety of those victims at high risk of domestic and gender violence. The Partnership acknowledges that recognising risk, and supporting victims and their children

²¹ Women's Aid, 2009

to enhance their safety is central to effective provision of domestic and gender violence support services. Safety of victims and their families is the most vital focus within Hackney's approach to domestic and gender violence.

Underlying principle 5: Provide a client-centred approach to supporting victims of domestic and gender violence, within which the safety of the victim and their family is the paramount consideration.

2.6 Focus on the perpetrator

Too often in cases of domestic and gender violence, the focus of agencies and members of the public is solely on the victim. Although we acknowledge that all victims should be supported and empowered to reach solutions which are appropriate for them, it is also important to focus on the perpetrator in these cases, and do our utmost to ensure they are held accountable for their actions. Perpetrators should also be provided with support for them to change their behaviour. We need to develop a detailed picture of domestic violence perpetrators entering the criminal justice system; identify agencies and services involved in interventions with such perpetrators; and highlight help-seeking pathways and potential opportunities for early intervention and prevention.

Underlying principle 6: Provide perpetrators of domestic and gender violence with programmes that help them to understand their behaviour, provide alternative behaviour, and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable.

2.7 Power and control as the root causes of domestic and gender violence²²

It is important to acknowledge that not all forms of domestic and gender violence are experienced physically by the victim. Many victims who suffer

²² See the Duluth Model Power and Control Model <http://www.theduluthmodel.org/pdf/PhyVio.pdf>

from domestic or gender violence have never been physically hurt, but have endured devastating psychological, emotional and other forms of abuse. In the vast majority of cases, the root cause of domestic and gender violence is the perpetrator's need for power and control over the victim. Most victims are in fear of the perpetrator which is how this control is achieved.

Underlying principle 7: The Partnership acknowledges that victims of domestic and gender violence do not need to have been physically hurt to be in need of protection and provision.

2.8 Recognition of Hackney's diverse communities as central to the strategy

Residents from white ethnic backgrounds make up 59.4% of Hackney's inhabitants²³, and the borough has large Black African, Black Caribbean, Turkish-speaking, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot, and Orthodox Jewish communities as well as many other community groups. An effective response to domestic and gender violence takes into account the diverse needs and experiences of Hackney's many communities. An awareness-raising communications campaign on domestic and gender violence will be available in community languages, and support services will continue to use language line, translation and interpreting services, as required under equalities legislation. Issues primarily affecting Black, Minority or Ethnic communities in the borough, such as support for victims of domestic and gender violence with No Recourse to Public Funds²⁴, will be highlighted and addressed.

²³ LBH Community Safety Joint Strategic Assessment 2006-2007

²⁴ No Recourse to Public Funds is defined as:

- A person who is subject to **immigration control**; and
- Has **no entitlement** to welfare benefits, public housing or HO asylum support; and
- Most often does not have the right to work*.

* *People granted leave as spouses or civil partners are permitted to take up employment.* ("Local Authority obligations to people with

No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)", Olivia Fellas, Team Manager, LB Islington)

Underlying principle 8: Maintain the provision of appropriate services for specific community groups, with awareness that not all community members will automatically require / prefer community-specific services.

3. Key Partnership commitments and objectives

Commitment 1: Prevention

We will work together to prevent domestic and gender violence through awareness-raising initiatives, sending a clear message to potential perpetrators that domestic and gender violence will not be tolerated, and educating children and young people on domestic and gender violence.

Objectives

1. Continue the work based on our Domestic and Gender Violence Communication Plan. This promotes a shared understanding of the domestic and gender violence agenda, raises awareness of available services and support, celebrates success across the borough and disseminates Partnership news.
2. Enhance strategic leadership on domestic and gender violence.
3. Encourage reporting of incidents from under-represented groups.
4. Further integrate domestic and gender violence into service plans and strategies.
5. Further develop domestic and gender violence age appropriate prevention work in schools, youth projects and family support work.
6. Develop interventions with domestic and gender violence perpetrators outside of the criminal justice system.
7. Develop stronger links with substance abuse treatment services to change abusive behaviour where possible, as problematic alcohol use may limit the effectiveness of intervention programmes with these offenders.

Commitment 2: Provision

We are committed to providing high quality support services for victims and their families to ensure that those affected by domestic and gender violence are empowered to improve their safety and re-build their lives, free from violence.

Objectives

1. Maintain the Partnership commitment to supporting victims of domestic and gender violence.
2. Aim to ensure that victims are called back within 24 hours of a referral being received through the freephone helpline.
3. Provide counselling for victims of domestic and gender violence.
4. Work with the criminal justice system so that more offenders are brought to justice and cases are fast-tracked through dedicated courts.
5. Strengthen joint working between substance misuse and domestic and gender violence services.
6. Support the introduction of Rape Crisis Centres which will provide enhanced support for victims of rape.
7. Encourage reporting by male victims of domestic and gender violence.
8. Support the development of domestic and gender violence training and information for professionals and volunteers.
9. Support a programme to help understand and tackle alcohol-related domestic abuse in Hackney, so victims and perpetrators with substance addictions can be supported to change behaviour.
10. Ensure provision of specialist support services for children and young people affected by domestic and gender violence.
11. Ensure the needs of Hackney's ethnically diverse communities are central to domestic and gender violence service provision.

Commitment 3: Protection

We will utilise our Integrated Partnership Response approach to improve the safety of victims of domestic and gender violence and their children. This will involve effective partnership working and clear communication between agencies, in order to meet the often complex needs of victims.

Objectives

1. Maintain our commitment to the domestic and gender violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and ensure it is effectively run.
2. Maintain a Partnership Triage system, which works to signpost cases in which children are affected by domestic violence to appropriate services, so that they are adequately protected and their needs met.
3. Develop the housing sector's response to domestic and gender violence. This will include an emphasis on support, and advice to victims to obtain sole tenancy rights to properties when domestic violence occurs and the victim is forced to leave the home. This would stop perpetrators effectively gaining control of the home, and allow the victim to return.
4. Develop the health sector's response to domestic and gender violence, including routine and / or clinical screening for domestic and gender violence by healthcare professionals.
5. Raise public awareness of domestic and gender violence provision so victims are aware of services available and how to access them.
6. Acknowledge the importance of services for standard risk victims of domestic and gender violence, to prevent their risk level from increasing to high.
7. Ensure protection of children from domestic violence by equipping professionals working with children and families in Hackney with an understanding of domestic violence including the nature, scale and extent of domestic violence and its effects on victims, children and others.

Commitment 4: Prosecution

We will work to prosecute perpetrators and ensure they are held accountable for their actions, while sending a clear message that the responsibility for domestic and gender violence lies solely with the abuser.

Objectives

1. Further strengthen a co-ordinated approach to detection and arrest of domestic violence perpetrators.
2. Maintain our support of the Specialist Domestic Violence Court.
3. Further strengthen a co-ordinated approach to conviction and effective sentencing of domestic and gender violence perpetrators.
4. Communicate clear messages to perpetrators / potential perpetrators that domestic and gender violence will not be tolerated.

4. Implementation and delivery

This strategy is an overarching document, which sets out a common understanding and commitment from key stakeholders to tackle domestic and gender violence in Hackney.

It promotes working together in a planned way. An implementation plan will also be produced detailing each of the strategic priorities and commitments, highlighting:

- Objectives
- Actions required for delivery
- Outputs
- Outcomes

It will also include details of the agencies leading areas of work, as well as the identification of resources. The Domestic Violence Partnership Manager will have responsibility for the co-ordination of the delivery of this strategy and the implementation of the action plans. This will be led through the Hackney Domestic Violence Strategic Sub-Group under the Safer Cleaner Board, which will include identified lead representatives from the agencies responsible for the actions.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

The Hackney Domestic and Gender Violence Strategy will be subjected to regular review and consideration, to:

- Monitor progress against targets and objectives
- Assess performance in comparison to other areas
- Understand whether actions and activities are achieving the required outcomes
- Establish the overall impact and effectiveness of the strategy
- Incorporate new legislation and government directives and reflect local need to ensure continued effectiveness

The Hackney Domestic Violence Partnership Manager will be responsible for monitoring the progress against the implementation action plans. Interim progress reports will be made to the Hackney Domestic Violence Strategic Sub-Group, who will have the remit for delivery of the strategy. Reports by exception will also be submitted to the Safer Cleaner Board.

The Domestic Violence Policy and Operational Group will be responsible for ensuring the priorities and actions identified in this strategy are fully implemented across the respective agencies.

