

From: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services
Andrew Scott-Clark, Director of Public Health

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 20 September 2019

Subject: Domestic Abuse Strategy

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Division: All

Summary:

The Domestic Abuse Strategy is a partnership document managed by the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive. KCC has worked with partners to develop a coherent and focused strategy, which is currently out for consultation.

The final strategy will be launched by the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office in late Autumn.

Recommendations:

Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and note the draft Domestic Abuse Strategy and proposed next steps.

1. Background

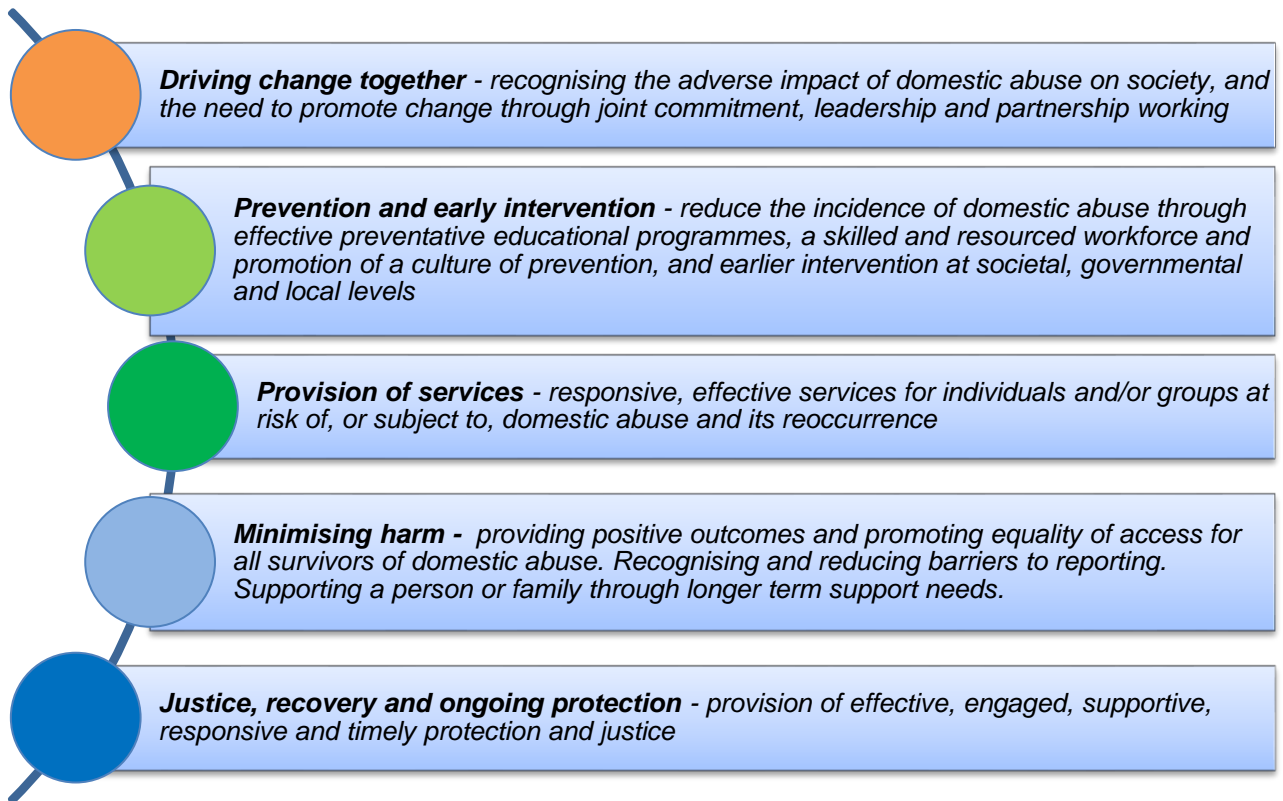
- 1.1 In October 2017 the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group was established with standing representation from Kent County Council, Kent Police, Medway Council, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, the National Probation Service, Kent and Medway CCGs and District Councils. One of the key responsibilities of this group is to enable joint collaborative working across this county agenda, to manage the construction of strategy and the implementation of actions across partners.
- 1.2 Nationally, the draft Domestic Abuse Bill was published in January 2019 and is currently moving through Parliament. The Bill brings forward a number of legislative changes including the appointment of a Domestic Abuse Commissioner who will seek consistency of service over areas and evidence of the consideration of children, minority and marginalised groups within the policy and delivery of services. In May 2019 the government also consulted on

accommodation-based domestic abuse services. The consultation proposes mandatory joint working across partners with joint governance structures which hold responsibility for Domestic Abuse strategy over areas.

- 1.3 Within this context the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group is overseeing the development of the Domestic Abuse Strategy, which formulates priorities across sectors and organisations, and the development and implementation of the multi-agency action plan to deliver this strategy. This work has been led by Kent County Council with vital input from partners including Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, Medway Council, the NHS and probation services. The strategy is in draft and is currently out for consultation.
- 1.4 A Domestic Abuse Coordinator role has recently been appointed to. This role has been funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office for one year, after which other partners will share the funding if it needs to continue. The post-holder will lead future work on the development and implementation of the action plan.

2. The Domestic Abuse Strategy

- 2.1 The Domestic Abuse Strategy aims to prevent and reduce domestic abuse in Kent and Medway through working collectively across partners to strengthen preventive activity, improve support for those who have suffered from abuse, and make better use of the combined resources across agencies. Many different services and providers support families and individuals affected by domestic abuse. This strategy will drive the development of action to better connect the work across partners, focussing on the same objectives, enabling the strongest response and services possible.
- 2.2 The Strategy includes five core priority themes, described below. Underneath each priority are a number of commitments made collectively by the partnership. These commitments will be developed into specific, measurable actions within the action plan. The priority themes are:



- 2.3 Progress against these commitments will be monitored through reporting to both Kent and Medway's Community Safety Partnerships, the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office and Safeguarding Boards across Kent and Medway.
- 2.4 The consultation ends on 30th September 2019. To date the majority of responses have been broadly positive, and we have already received useful feedback which will strengthen the strategy and shape the resulting action plan. Once the consultation is completed, we will publish a summary of the consultation responses and the changes we have been made subsequent to this feedback.
- 2.5 An equality impact assessment has been completed and is available on <https://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/domesticabusestrategy/consultationHome>. This will be updated on completion of the consultation and the development of the final strategy.

3. Conclusions and next steps

- 3.1 The Domestic Abuse Strategy, together with the associated action plan which is still in development, aims to strengthen coordination, partnership working and focus across services which support individuals and families being affected by domestic abuse. It seeks to provide a clear narrative and definition of improvement. After the consultation is completed, the Strategy will be refined,

the action plan finalised, and a robust process developed for monitoring progress.

Recommendation: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and note the draft Domestic Abuse Strategy and proposed next steps.

Background documents:

- The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy - (Appendix A)

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