

EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

Domestic Abuse Framework 2027-29

Responsible Officer

Rachel Westlake - AH AIC

Approved by (Note: approval of this EqIA must be completed within the EqIA App)

Victoria Tovey - AH AIC

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

Project/Programme

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

No

Details of other Service Activity

No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Strategic and Corporate Services

Responsible Service

Public Health Commissioning

Responsible Head of Service

Victoria Tovey - AH AIC

Responsible Director

Ingrid Crisan - CY OICS

Aims and Objectives

Kent County Council (KCC) has a statutory responsibility under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse (DA) Act 2021 to;

- assess, or make arrangements for the assessment of, the need for “accommodation-based support” in its area,
- prepare and publish a strategy for the provision of such support in its area,
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.

(“Accommodation-based support” means support, in relation to domestic abuse, provided to victims of domestic abuse, or their children, who reside in relevant accommodation as defined by the Secretary of State which includes refuges, Sanctuary Schemes, move-on and dispersed accommodation.)

Since 2021, new Grant Funding has been awarded to support implementation of these duties.

It is proposed that the ‘Domestic Abuse Framework’ (previously agreed under key decision 23/00060 and 25/00033) will continue to be used to determine spend of Domestic Abuse Duty Safe Accommodation grant funding, and support decision making

The Framework decision approach places responsibility and accountability as well, as Strategic oversight, in

a centralised position. With the Leader exercising the full Executive function as the decision-maker, operational decision-making and implementation activity, within the scope defined by the Framework agreed by the Leader as part of this decision, is delegated to Officers.

Under this Framework all expenditure of DA Act funding must be in line with budget forecasting and adhere to the MHCLG Guidance and Grant terms. Additionally, proposals for spend must meet one of the following criteria:

- A. Will support the council in conducting its statutory functions under the DA Act which include assessing need, preparation, publication, monitoring and delivery of strategies, commissioning activity and mandatory reporting back to central Government.
- B. Will improve, develop, or maintain specialist support to people who have experienced domestic abuse (adults and children) residing in 'safe accommodation', as defined by the DA Act, (this includes Refuge accommodation, Specialist Safe accommodation, Dispersed accommodation, Sanctuary Schemes and Second stage accommodation) to meet gaps identified through the needs assessment.

Examples of projects that would meet the criteria include.

- Engagement project to develop and maintain engagement with people who have experienced domestic abuse.
- Development of new services to reduce barriers within existing support offers to underserved groups.

The extension and implementation of the Domestic Abuse Framework across 2027-29 will have significant positive impacts across protected groups by strengthening the Council's ability to commission, target and adapt services in line with identified needs and statutory duties.

Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?

Yes

It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?

Yes

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?

Yes

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

Yes

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

Activity delivering Domestic Abuse Act statutory duties using the Domestic Abuse Grant funding enables delivery of the Kent and Medway DA Strategy 2024-29 that has been coproduced by KCC and all other partners. This includes KCC, ASCH, CYPE, Kent Police, ICB, KFRS, Probation. Members from the following groups have also been engaged with around this activity;
Local Partnership Board, DA Tactical Group, DA Executive Board, New Burdens Funding Steering Group.

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?

Yes

Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients

Service users/clients

Staff

Staff/Volunteers

Residents/Communities/Citizens

Residents/communities/citizens

Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?

Yes

Details of Positive Impacts

The implementation of the Domestic Abuse Framework is expected to deliver clear positive impacts across protected groups, grounded in the findings of the Kent Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment (2023), which provides detailed evidence on the scale, distribution and demographics of need across the county.

https://www.kpho.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/164009/Kent-Domestic-Abuse-Needs-Assessment-2023.pdf

The needs assessment confirms that domestic abuse in Kent is widespread and complex, with disproportionate impact on women, while also affecting:

- children and young people, including those living in or moving through safe accommodation
- people with disabilities and complex needs
- individuals facing multiple disadvantage (including mental health, housing need and substance misuse)
- ethnically diverse communities and other underserved groups, who may face barriers to access

It also highlights variation across districts and increasing complexity of need, including higher safeguarding risk and co-occurring vulnerabilities. The Framework provides a mechanism to ensure that funding is explicitly directed toward the gaps in provision identified through the needs assessment, including:

- improving access to safe accommodation-based support
- addressing barriers experienced by underserved and marginalised groups
- strengthening provision for those with complex and intersecting needs

The Framework provides a structured mechanism to translate needs assessment findings into funded service provision, ensuring that gaps in support are addressed in a planned and evidence-based way and allows for the development of new and targeted services to reduce barriers for underserved groups, including those with protected characteristics, where unmet need has been identified.

Examples include;

- Male Refuge Pilot which provides safe accommodation support to male survivors of domestic abuse and their accompanying children.
- Kent Safe Accommodation Support Service which reduces barriers for those with disabilities in accessing safe accommodation support.

This supports more equitable access to services and improved outcomes across protected groups.

The Framework enables flexible and responsive commissioning, allowing services to:

- adapt to changes in demand and demographic profile
- pilot or introduce targeted interventions where unmet need is identified
- realign funding to respond to updated needs assessments and emerging evidence

The Framework directly supports delivery of the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024–2029

https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/205360/Domestic-Abuse-Strategy-2024-to-2029.pdf, ensuring that:

- services are evidence-led and aligned to identified need
- partners work together to deliver a coordinated, system-wide response

This strengthens the system’s ability to address inequalities and improve outcomes across diverse communities.

Multi-year funding and governance through the Framework enables long-term planning, improving service quality and sustainability. This supports co-production and lived experience input, ensuring that services better reflect the needs of different communities. While the Framework itself is an enabling governance mechanism, it has clear positive equality impacts by ensuring that funding is systematically directed toward addressing inequalities identified through the needs assessment and by enabling the development of targeted services for underserved groups. Overall, the Framework has a positive equality impact by ensuring that commissioning is driven by robust needs assessment evidence, enabling services to be targeted, flexible and responsive to the demographic profile of domestic abuse in Kent and to address identified inequalities in access and outcomes.

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

Are there negative impacts for age?

No

Details of negative impacts for Age

Not Applicable

Mitigating Actions for Age

Not Applicable

Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age

Not Applicable

20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability

Are there negative impacts for Disability?

No

Details of Negative Impacts for Disability

Not Applicable

Mitigating actions for Disability

Not Applicable

Responsible Officer for Disability

Not Applicable

21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex

Are there negative impacts for Sex

No

Details of negative impacts for Sex

Not Applicable

Mitigating actions for Sex

Not Applicable

Responsible Officer for Sex

Not Applicable

22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender

Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender

No

Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender

Not Applicable

Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender

Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race
Are there negative impacts for Race
No
Negative impacts for Race
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief
No
Negative impacts for Religion and belief
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief
Not Applicable
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
No
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
No
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
No
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities

No
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable