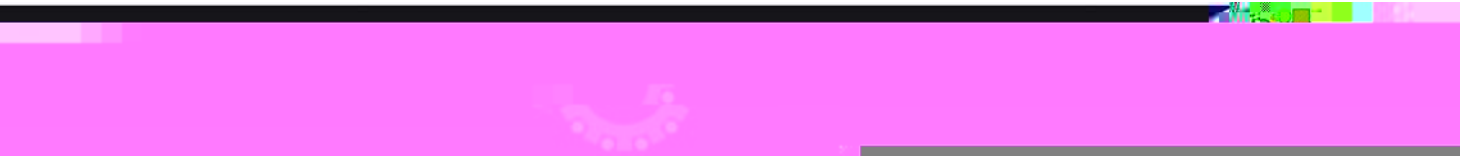


Working with Communities to Prevent Relationship Violence







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6.2	Offender management: civil proceedings	28
7	Commissioning	30



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Working with Communities to Prevent Relationship Violence

Summary of Recommendations

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R01	<p>That the City Council encourages community-led preventative approaches within its own services and amongst its partner organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) involving working closely with community and voluntary organisations and faith groups; b) utilising and updating the most recent contact information about community champions and community leaders; c) mobilising communities and encouraging them to tackle attitudes to relationship violence with a view to preventing relationship violence and bringing about cultural change in the longer term. 	<p>Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing</p>	November 2015
R02	<p>That the City Council strengthens its leadership role for the city by reviewing the domestic violence strategy and enabling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) coherent pathways for victims and children, across sectors, to access the support and protection they need; b) strengthening the engagement of schools and other educational establishments, including academies, committing to participating; c) integrated working between Birmingham Youth Services and Think Family Team and Children's Services and homelessness; d) youth service providers from both statutory and third sector involvement in the delivery of informal education programmes with young people. 	<p>Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing</p>	November 2015



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	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R03	<p>That the City Council and its partners encourage schools and educational establishments to take a 'whole school approach' to children and young people developing positive relationships and provide guidance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) the delivery of school based educational programmes and awareness campaigns aimed at educating young people about healthy relationships in both primary and secondary settings drawing on the expertise of the specialist domestic violence sector;b) working in partnership with youth service providers and in facilitating informal education delivery that promotes healthy relationships and brings about a change in attitudes to relationship violence; andc) working with parents to educate parents about attitudes to relationship violence.	Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and	





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that victims frequently tell services that they have noticed the campaigns, often storing the help numbers and using them at some time in the future when they are ready to seek help.

1.2.6 In terms of community education , Members were told that Birmingham has been running annual domestic violence awareness campaigns for the last decade through the Birmingham Community Safety Partnership, through the Violence Against Women Group, through local quadrant based domestic violence fora and through individual organisations. These have been aimed variously at:

- x Victims: providing positive messages about the help that is available;
- x Perpetrators: conveying deterrence based messages and often aligned to sporting fixtures and targeting pubs and alcohol sales with the threat of criminal and civil justice for abusers;
- x Family and Friends: providing guidance on what to do and how to seek help;
- x The LGBT community: through Pink Shield aimed at encouraging reporting to the police in 2010 and an LGBT community awareness campaign in 2014 in advance of the provision of a dedicated LGBT independent domestic violence advisor which commenced in December 2014;
- x Workers: raising awareness of the challenges that victims and children face through charity events and collections for refuges and through exhibitions showcasing women and children's voices through artwork;
- x Young People: Ashram's work with young people in refuges to create a fund-raising single.

1.2.7 Secondary prevention refers to what happens to minimise the risks and to prevent the harm or the escalation of harm, once the existence of domestic violence is known about. This involves the early identification and provision of resources, help and support to those who are already experiencing harm or are particularly likely to experience harm, with the aim of decreasing the incidence and longevity of the harm caused in each case.

1.2.8 Everyone has a role to play in the prevention of often deep-rooted cross-cultural norms and practices, particularly in respect of violence against women. This is expressly not just about the activity of statutory agencies. This is about how we can improve engagement with and build community confidence so that the statutory agencies can work in concert with community partners in seeking to prevent relationship violence before it occurs.

1.3 Scale of the domestic violence and abuse challenge

1.3.1 It is clear from the evidence that there is a significant problem with domestic violence and abuse in Birmingham. The Birmingham Community Safety Partnership Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment (2013) ("the Needs Assessment") estimated that there were just over 25,000



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women aged 16-59 who have experienced some form of domestic violence and abuse in the preceding 12 months.³

- 1.3.2 The scale of the challenge needs to be set in the context of the plethora of other work that is already underway in responding to the challenge. This includes the development of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), the 'Think Family' initiative, the Le Grand Review, the Warner Report and the learning which is starting to emerge from the Domestic Homicide Reviews (see section 5). In particular, the ongoing work across the region by the West Midlands-wide multi-agency domestic violence group which is chaired by the Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People (PVVP) Strategic Lead, Stephen Rimmer and the PVVP Board who are overseeing the implementation of their Delivery Plan. The challenge also needs to be set in the context of the climate of continuing austerity which makes it even more imperative than ever to have a co-ordinated approach for the city as a whole and to ensure that more integrated working with partners becomes the norm.

1.4 Lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or trans (LGBT) domestic violence






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- 1.6.2 Although BME victims of domestic violence can access all of the domestic violence refuges in the City, as all domestic violence services will be striving hard to be culturally sensitive to meet the needs of all, it is nonetheless important that BME victims have a choice of whether to access identity specific services or not. For some women, generalist domestic violence refuges and services may provide the vital anonymity that they require, for others, they may feel that their safety is better realised with those that they share a common heritage or culture. Two agencies provide identity specific refuge in the City: Trident Reach in partnership with the National Zakat Foundation and Roshni.
- 1.6.3 In spite of the fact that prevalence rates for domestic abuse are not known to be significantly higher in any ethnic group, some aspects of gendered violence such as forced marriage, honour based violence and female genital mutilation can compound experiences of abuse for women in certain communities.
- 1.6.4 Forced marriage is defined as:
- A marriage where one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can involve physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In the case of some vulnerable adults who lack capacity to consent, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.⁵
- 1.6.5 The point was made in evidence to the Committee that there is no systematic campaign or awareness raising work in the city around attitudes of young Asian people or other BME groups to honour based violence or children missing from education who may be subjected to forced marriage. Members were also told that there is an absolute link between forced marriage and domestic violence and that this should be seen ostensibly, but not exclusively, within the wider continuum of violence against women, and between forced marriage and intergenerational violence which may happen to coerce people to marry or to continue in a forced marriage. Work is underway through the Safeguarding Adult Board on dealing with intergenerational violence.
- 1.6.6 Forced marriage is often closely linked to honour based violence or honour crime. This is described by the government to encompass:
- A variety of crimes of violence (mainly but not exclusively against women) including assault, imprisonment and murder where the person is being punished by their family or their community. They are being punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining what the family or community believes is the correct code of behaviour.⁶
- 1.6.7 The 2013/14 Roshni Annual Report contains some useful statistics which they have gathered about the women they support. The data collated by Roshni gives a snapshot of the support provided by

⁵ HM Government (2013) The Right to Choose: Multi Agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage

⁶ HM Government (2014) The Right to Choose: Multi Agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage



them to the women they help. The total number of residents admitted during the year was 33, with 8 still residing from the previous year which gives a total of 41. The main reason for referral was physical violence with the next most numerous reason being forced marriage. The majority of



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1.8.2 The Government's 'Positive for Youth' strategy and analysis of the 'This is Abuse'⁹ campaign indicated a normalisation and acceptability of abuse amongst young people and an alarming lack of understanding about sexual consent.

Some young people, particularly the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, need additional help to develop the personal and social skills and qualities they need to participate and attain in learning, avoid negative and risky behaviours, and be ready for adult life and work. Some also need early help to address specific issues and prevent them causing harm.¹⁰

1.8.3

2 Engaging with communities

2.1 A community-led approach to prevention

Even if all statutory public services right across the West Midlands were beacons of excellent practice, the risk, threat and harm inside communities of particularly personal, intimate crimes is such that the voice of the victim can still easily be suppressed. Direct engagement with real communities in surfacing and discussing these difficult issues is a core part of my and many other public servants' job. It is not enough to leave this to political leaders alone; and as the Jay report so powerfully emphasised, we cannot rely on traditional forms of dialogue with "community leaders", some of whom may be ignorant or even hostile to the voices of some of those actually at risk within their communities.¹²

2.1.1 Any response to the challenge posed by domestic violence and abuse cannot be effective on its own. In order to address this seriously, the local authority and other partners involved such as the police and the NHS need to work directly with organisations with strong roots in and who are already engaging with their local community in bringing about cultural change and in providing an effective community coordinated response to support victims and their families.

2.1.2 As indicated in the quotation at the start of this section, for the community-led approach to tackling relationship violence outlined in recommendation 1 to be effective, we cannot rely on traditional forms of dialogue with "community leaders". In particular, stronger links need to be forged with a wide range of religious establishments with strong roots in local communities where issues of relationship abuse often surface. For this approach to succeed the local authority need to ensure that an up to date record of contact details and links to community and faith based groups is maintained and updated on a regular basis, annually as a minimum, which can be used to facilitate dialogue with a wider range of community leaders and community groups than has happened previously.

2.2 Mobilising communities

2.2.1 In this context, the importance of working with and mobilising communities through community champions as a good model for social change was referred to repeatedly by a number of witnesses, especially in relation to trying to bring some very personal and intimate crimes such as female genital mutilation, forced marriage and honour violence to the surface. The Committee

¹² Annual Report by PVVP Strategic leader, Page 11



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heard that empowering individuals in newly arrived communities to deliver the services they need is key to instigating change.

- 2.2.2 Representatives of affected communities told the Committee that language, cultural and social barriers often mean that these communities find it hard to approach people from outside their communities because they won't necessarily know who to go to and more often than not find it



3 Place Leadership role for local authority

3.1 Collaborative approach

- 3.1.1 Any response to the challenge presented by the widespread social issue of relationship violence needs to include both statutory partners and the voluntary and community sector to have any serious chance of bringing about improvements in the lives of those affected. Achieving improved outcomes will necessitate a new and



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x Women exploited through prostitution and trafficking.

3.2.3 However, as highlighted by Stephen Rimmer in his evidence to the Inquiry and in his PVVP Annual Report, there is little point in having a strategy if it is not implemented and there is often a gap between strategic intent and operational delivery. In order to implement the Strategy, it will be necessary to make strenuous efforts to ensure that, as far as is possible, all schools, including academies, are on board with the revised Strategy. Getting Birmingham schools on board with the Strategy will be vital to the implementation when it comes to working with other partners on delivering the educational programmes and awareness campaigns referred to in section 4.1 of this report.

3.2.4 The refreshed Strategy also needs to be linked to an operating model which works across the City and needs to be informed by an evidence base about the types of interventions that actually work. It also needs to be aligned to the Think Families agenda and to be embedded across all agencies in order for the strategy to be implemented successfully.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R02	<p>That the City Council strengthens its leadership role for the city by reviewing the domestic violence strategy and enabling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) coherent pathways for victims and children, across sectors, to access the support and protection they need; b) strengthening the engagement of schools and other educational establishments, including academies, committing to participating; c) integrated working between Birmingham Youth Services and Think Family Team and Children’s Services and homelessness; d) youth service providers from both statutory and third sector involvement in the delivery of informal education programmes with young people. 	Cabinet Member for Social	





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expressed to members by a range of witnesses that greater efforts need to be made to encourage and persuade as many schools and educational establishments as possible, including academies, to take part in this preventative work.

4.1.4 In terms of delivering this primary preventative work, there are a variety of organisations who are

4.2 Informal education

- 4.2.1 In addition to school based programmes, Members heard about the important preventative work which happens outside of school through youth work delivery supporting children and young people in building positive relationships, building resilience and providing young people with coping strategies which are crucial in tackling this agenda.
- 4.2.2 Birmingham's Youth Service offer a range of targeted programmes that help young people understand what is a 'healthy relationship'. By developing an understanding of what constitutes a healthy relationship, this work enables discussion about 'unhealthy relationships' in a non-threatening and informal environment. Examples of these programmes include:
- x SHE – Sexual Health Education programme;
 - x CSE Project run in partnership with Cherished and WM Police;
 - x YouTube video project looking at violence in relationships; and
 - x DV workshops in partnership with Barnardos.
- 4.2.3 These youth work programmes are particularly important for those young people who do not readily engage within the school environment. Youth workers seek to raise young people's awareness regarding healthy relationships whether with friends, parents, partners or in the wider community through a variety of methods that:
- x Address the domestic violence and abuse issues faced by young people;
 - x Highlight issues of importance around relationships, violence and abuse;
 - x Challenge attitudes and stimulate discussion.
- 4.2.4 With a primary aim of preventing domestic violence and abuse from taking place in young people's current and future relationships by:
- x Promoting self-esteem;
 - x Raising awareness of domestic violence and abuse in a safe environment;
 - x Exploring myths and stereotypes about gender and behaviour;
 - x Empowering young people to recognise safe and unsafe situations; and
 - x Exploring rights and responsibilities associated with relationships.
- 4.2.5 A focus was put on the importance of youth work for building young people's resilience by providing the skills and attitude to cope with challenging situations as well as ensuring a sense of self-worth and belonging. If young people have this then they are better able to recognise and remove themselves from violent relationships.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R03	<p>That the City Council and its partners encourage schools and educational establishments to take a 'whole school approach' to children and young people developing positive relationships and provide guidance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the delivery of school based educational programmes and awareness campaigns aimed at educating young people about healthy relationships in both primary and secondary settings drawing on the expertise of the specialist domestic violence sector; b) working in partnership with youth service providers and in facilitating informal education delivery that promotes healthy relationships and brings about a change in attitudes to relationship violence; and c) working with parents to educate parents about attitudes to relationship violence. 	Cabalnst Memns ta ati 129.78 .479rn98.7dattitudes td4.0 71N2c 0 T	



5 Prevention: learning lessons from domestic homicide reviews

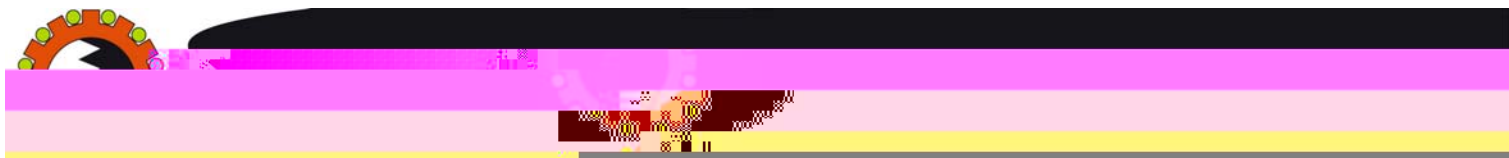
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5.2.3 Due to its size Birmingham Community Safety Partnership is conducting significantly more domestic homicide reviews than any other single area in England and Wales, although the number of deaths pro rata is comparable with other metropolitan areas. Since April 2011, there have been twenty deaths initially considered to be domestic homicides. Of the twenty, the coroner concluded in one case that the death occurred through natural causes without suspicious circumstances so a domestic homicide review was not required. At the time of writing, progress with the remaining 19 was as follows:

- x Five reviews have been published;
- x One is concluded but subject to risk assessment before publication;
- x Three will shortly be submitted to the Home Office;
- x Eight are in full progress and;
- x Two are in the early stages of being undertaken.

5.3 Emerging learning and themes

5.3.1 Initial analysis of the data¹⁵





schools and universal children's services provide important settings for the early identification of domestic violence and abuse and are increasingly featuring in domestic homicide reviews.

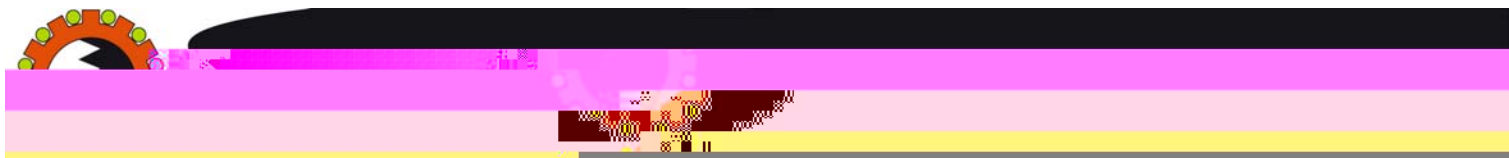



6 Dealing with perpetrators

6.1 Offender management: criminal proceedings

- 6.1.1 The evidence from West Midlands Police to the Inquiry was that we are working from a position of strength in Birmingham in relation to partnership working and that significant advances are being made in managing domestic violence perpetrators and in ensuring that they are prevented from continuing to abuse victims and children. However the landscape around violence and abuse is changing and changes are taking place within the context of an ongoing national debate about the law relating to domestic abuse.
- 6.1.2 West Midlands Police have over recent years shifted more resources into public protection and this is beginning to show results. Work is ongoing to understand better what victims want from police intervention with the aspiration of building the conf







helpline which will be working in partnership with Gateway, The helpline is provided by Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid.

- 7.2.2 In the course of the evidence gathering for this Inquiry members heard from some third sector organisations about the impact of the revised commissioning process on them. However at the time of writing this report the Partnership, Contract Performance and Third Sector Overview and Scrutiny Committee were also drafting their Inquiry report into Council Commissioning with Third Sector organisations. For this reason, it would not be appropriate for this Inquiry to duplicate work by making recommendations about the commissioning process and detailed evidence was not heard by the Members. However, the Committee will be interested to hear about the findings and recommendations within that report and in particular about the support that smaller and specialist third sector organisations might require in the future in accessing commissioning and contracting opportunities and being part of the discussions when new proposals are out for consultation. There was also concern that when the City Council commissions services that it pays attention to the needs of all communities especially those providing specialist services to the most vulnerable in our communities and where there are specific needs.



8 Conclusions

8.1 Leadership

- 8.1.1 Relationship violence is a term which can be used to describe a wide range of crimes including domestic violence and abuse and including forced marriage, honour based violence and female genital mutilation. Each of these constitute specialised topics in themselves and as such they would each merit a separate Inquiry. For the purposes of this report, due to the time constraints

participate in preventative work. In addition to school based programmes, informal education which happens outside of school in supporting children and young people to build positive relationships and resilience through youth work delivery is important in tackling this agenda and schools need to work in partnership with youth service providers in facilitating this to happen.

8.1.5 The local authority needs to take up the challenge of fulfilling a 'leadership role' in order to provide a more coherent approach for the whole City, to bring about an environment where more integrated working can happen more easily and to facilitate the necessary shift to a more preventative approach to alleviating the suffering of so many victims of relationship violence in the City.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R04	That an assessment of progress against the recommendations made in this report be presented to the relevant O&S Committee	Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety	November 2015

