

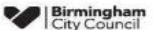
Birmingham's draft Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2024+ Overview and consultation

Revinder Johal – Head of Service Domestic Abuse
Prevention and Strategy

Shirin Marashi – Senior Commissioning Officer, ASC



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The Context:

- **Nationally**- it is reported that in March 22 2.4 million adults were affected by Domestic abuse.(DA) (Crime survey England and Wales)
- **Locally**- DA crimes reported to the police in Birmingham more than doubled from 13,664 in 2018/19 to 28,346 in 2021/22.
- High risk cases referred to MARAC have increased from 2,230 in 2019/20 to 4,098 in 2021/22 – an increase of over 50%.
- Calls to the commissioned DA Hub helpline continue to increase; in 2019/20 8,986 calls were made, compared to 29,137 in 2021/22 - an increase of over 200%
- DA drives demand across the Council and is root cause of countless presentations.
 - 3rd highest reason for Homelessness
 - 2nd top reason for contacts to Birmingham Childrens Trust.



Hidden Harm – numbers are tip of the iceberg

Scope of the strategy

- Domestic can happen to **anyone**, from any background, in any relationship.
- Gendered crime:
 - Of the 2.4 million adults who experienced DA related crime, March 2022, 74.1% were female.
 - 2019 – 2021, 72.1% of victims of domestic homicide were female (for non-domestic, women are 12.3%)
 - More than 90% of cases heard at MARAC high risk conferences in England and Wales, are women.
 - Of the 992 DA homeless presentations in Birmingham 2022/23, 943 were women.
- Takes account of our public sector duty under s149 of the Equalities Act 2010 by responding to the needs of those with protected characteristics who face additional barriers and require a response to intersectional needs.
- Cultural competency framework undergoing development.

Background : Current Strategy

Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2018+

- Outlines a layered **prevention model** focusing on three key priorities:
 - - Changing Attitudes and Behaviours
 - - Early Identification and Early Help
 - - Safety and Support
- **Makes DA everyone's business. Scale of change required means no one single agency can deliver.** Partnership strategy promoting collective action.

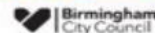
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Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2018-2023

Changing Attitudes Changing lives



Making a positive difference everyday to people's lives.



Our new strategy outlines a layered prevention model and focuses on three key priorities:



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Background: Scrutiny involvement to date

- Roundtable Chaired by Coordinating Oversight and Scrutiny Committee, led by Councillors Yip, Jan, and Jenkins, was held in December, attended by over 30 multi-agency partners
- Followed-up by a single-issue meeting in February 2023, attended by Councillor Cotton (then Cabinet Member for Social Justice Community Safety and Equalities), Councillor Brennan, and Maureen Connolly (CEO of Birmingham and Solihull women's Aid)
- A number of issues raised including response of criminal justice, housing, MARAC, children, and need for trained workforce
- Following this feedback, specialist DA training was offered to all Councillors, and delivered by BSWA in June and July.
- Commitment given to continue to involve members in development of strategy, given cross party support to this agenda.

The Draft Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2024+: The Strategy Working Group (SWG)

- Domestic Abuse Local Strategic Partnership Board chaired by Cllr Brennan ,has oversight of the strategy development .
- Strategy working group set up-key partners from across the city – including specialist providers. Chaired Graham Tilby, Assistant director ,Birmingham Childrens Trust.
- Overall Approach-
 - to ensure partnership approach to development
 - Embed early Intervention and prevention.
 - Align with key strategies like Violence against women and girls (VAWG).
 - Review implementation of current strategy.

SWG Approach



- Builds on previous Domestic Abuse Prevention strategy”.
- Key values and principles underpinning strategy including:
 - importance of trauma informed and trained workforce; Gendered approach, embedding equalities and intersectionality to support our super diverse city; Whole system response
- Being survivor-centred in our approach throughout the strategy
- Embedding prevention and early identification, including prevention of escalation of risk.
- Areas to be strengthened including:
 - Integration of learning from Domestic homicide reviews (DHRs)
 - Data and insight
 - Integrate partners’ priorities not be siloed.
 - Alignment with VAWG strategy other strategies.

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Draft content of new strategy

- Commitment Statement
- Introduction
- Values, scope of strategy and ensuring equalities.
- Understanding DA and legislation
- Impact of Domestic Abuse
- Supporting children as victims
- Part 4 duty discharging our duty and needs assessment.
- Our vision – strategy summary
- Governance and accountability
- Joint action plan (how we will implement the strategy and use of data insight)
- List of support agencies.

How will we do this? Strategy Priorities for change

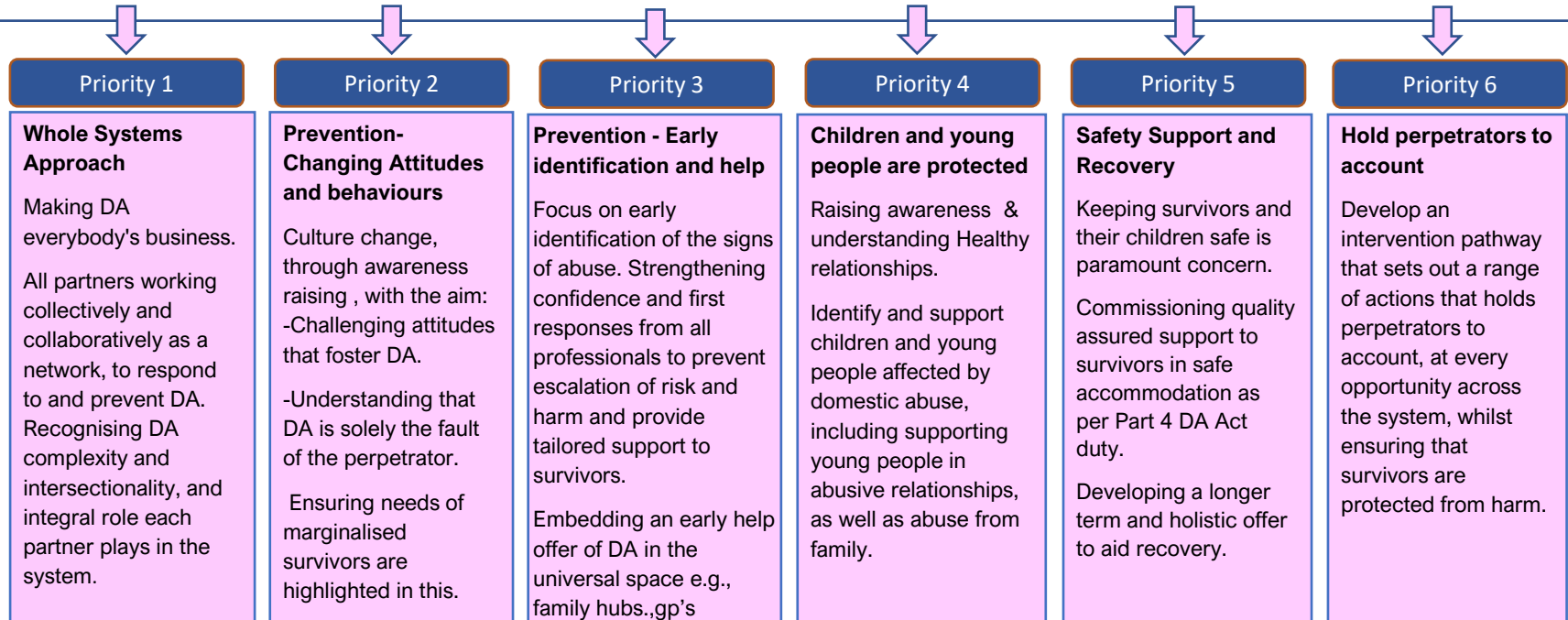
Vision – “Birmingham is a place where domestic abuse is not tolerated; where everyone can expect equality and respect in their relationships, and live free from domestic abuse.”

Values- Survivor centred- tailored trauma informed support for survivors including children, recognising safety as paramount.

Strengths based approach – that recognises all survivor has done to keep herself and her children safe during the perpetrator's abuse.

Survivor led - To sit alongside, and go at her pace, let her know her options, centring her in all decisions including around safeguarding

Accountability- recognises all perpetrators do to abuse, including using children to control and post separation abuse, and hold them accountable





Priority 1 – Whole System: Leadership, Partnership & Workforce



In line with the Domestic Abuse Act we have established a Domestic Abuse Strategic Board who will lead and drive forward progress made against the key priorities and ensure robust communication links with other strategic groups. It will deliver a co-produced, robust, co-ordinated community response to domestic abuse across the strategic partnerships and plan effective use of resources to improve outcomes.

Those subjected to domestic abuse, predominantly women and children, interact with multiple professionals in their day-to-day lives. This network of agencies across the city creates the whole system, and requires a consistent, coordinated response to domestic abuse.

What we will do:

- ✓ Develop a consistent, systematic process for collecting and sharing domestic abuse data and insight across the partnership to inform our strategic direction and action plan. This will also assist in understanding of demand, diverse characteristics and unmet need and used to inform service developments, future commissioning intentions and aim to remove any identified barrier to accessing support.
- ✓ Conduct multi-agency audits to consider the qualitative impact of progress made against the key priorities and the difference that this has made to the lives of survivors and their children.
- ✓ Ensure lessons learnt from Domestic Homicide Reviews, child and adult Serious case reviews (which include aspects of domestic abuse) are shared with organisations and are jointly considered at senior partnership level and learning is cascaded throughout the partnership.

What success will look like:

- ✓ Survivors across the system are given the right support at the right time, wherever they are, by a more confident and trained trauma-informed workforce, using a shared language and No Wrong Door approach.



Priority 2 Prevention- Changing attitudes and behaviours.

Culture change across the city using awareness raising, understanding and education, with the aim challenging attitudes that foster domestic abuse. Challenging victim-blaming attitudes by increasing understanding across the city that domestic abuse is solely the fault of the perpetrator.

What we will do:

- ✓ Develop and implement a comprehensive partnership communication and marketing strategy to raise the profile and awareness of domestic abuse throughout the year, through different mediums: campaigns, toolkits, social media, digital media, ensuring consistent and appropriate communication messages around domestic abuse.
- ✓ A robust and consistent approach to domestic abuse through education of healthy relationships in all schools, colleges and university enabling more children and young people to grow up developing an understanding of what makes a healthy relationship.
- ✓ Changing attitudes of key partners in the system, from leadership to frontline officers – not victim blaming, embedding anti racist practice, challenging misogyny and holding perpetrators to account.

What success will look like:

- ✓ An increase in healthy relationships, and a decrease in victim blaming attitudes and tolerance for abuse.



Priority 3 Prevention- Early identification and Help

Clear focus on early identification of the signs of abuse and strengthening first responses from all professionals to prevent escalation of risk and harm. Embedding an early help offer of domestic abuse in the universal space like family hubs and health settings.

What we will do

- ✓ Embed professional curiosity, for example through routine enquiry, to empower staff to recognise signs of domestic abuse at an early stage, and offer appropriate, tailored support.
- ✓ Embed an approach that ensures that risk assessment and safety planning is an ongoing process and part of every interaction with the survivor, to help prevent the escalation of risk, recognising that risk can change daily.
- ✓ Increase the amount of community support available to enable survivors to stay safely in their own homes surrounded by their own support networks.

What success will look like:

- ✓ Domestic abuse will be identified earlier, survivors receive the right support at the right time, and escalation and harm is prevented.



Priority 4 - Children and young people are protected from the effects of domestic abuse

Work as a partnership to Identify and support children and young people affected by domestic abuse, including supporting young people in abusive relationships.

What we will do

- ✓ Ensure there is specialist children's support across the pathway, from prevention through to crisis
- ✓ Ensuring that all services are supportive of the non-abusive parent and recognise all of the actions they take to keep their child safe, whilst recognising that an abusive parent cannot be a good parent.
- ✓ Raise awareness and understanding of what to expect from a relationship, based on equality and respect, reviewing the current offer in all settings including schools, colleges, universities, and working to ensure a consistent offer to young people.

What success will look like:

- ✓ Children and young people across the pathway understand healthy relationships, and access appropriate support where needed.



Priority 5 –Safety, Support and Recovery



Ensuring that survivors and their children are kept safe and are supported through good quality assured specialist support both in safe accommodation as per Part 4 DA Act duty and in a community setting. Develop and embed a longer-term holistic offer to recovery

What we will do

- ✓ Commission quality assured specialist support for survivors and their children in safe accommodation, that meets their complex needs, based on needs assessment, data insight and intelligence from the market, including specialist DA sector to inform our commissioning intentions.
- ✓ Increase the amount of community support, and awareness of mechanisms such as civil orders and Sanctuary, available to enable survivors to stay safely in their own homes surrounded by their own support networks, where it is safe to do so.
- ✓ Ensure that holistic support to recover following the abuse is given, recognising wider needs such as mental health or financial support, and that professionals understand risks around post-separation abuse and suicide.

What success will look like:

- ✓ Increasing the number of survivors and their children who feel they can live their lives safely, and continue to live freely following the abuse.



Priority 6 - Hold perpetrators to account



Develop an intervention pathway that sets out a range of actions that holds perpetrators to account at every opportunity across the system rather than rely on a single agency to do this, and without putting the burden of actions on the survivor. This should span the continuum of domestic abuse ranging from civil injunctions and DAPO'S, to criminal convictions and offender management.

What we will do

- ✓ Develop a shared vision, where all partners recognise the need to work more collaboratively to hold perpetrators to account for their behaviour. Using learning from DHR'S and child and adult serious case reviews.
- ✓ Ensure partners continue to share appropriate information regarding risk of perpetrators – to work to keep survivors and her children safe.
- ✓ Empower frontline staff through specialist training and good practice guidance to implement interventions for the perpetrator (e.g. Civil orders), and challenge the abusive actions that perpetrators commit, recognising the impact of the actions and behaviour and understand that domestic abuse is a choice, and not a result of e.g., substance addiction or mental health. **All perpetrator intervention must keep the safety of women and children at the forefront.**

What success will look like:

- ✓ Survivors and their children are safe from the perpetrator, and all interventions across the system include perpetrator.

What does success look like?

This strategy seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- Survivors and their children are offered survivor centred support to address their specific needs.
- Workforce are confident to recognise and respond to domestic abuse through trauma informed training.
- Our community is educated as to what domestic abuse is, and what services are available in Birmingham.
- Abuse is reported earlier as people are confident in raising the issue, therefore reducing opportunities for harm.
- Consistent whole system approach is in place to respond appropriately to domestic abuse wherever the survivor is on their journey.

Question

a) Do the priorities reflect the key issues/challenges in Birmingham?

b) If not, what is missing?

How will we do this? Strategy Priorities for change

Vision - "Birmingham is a place where domestic abuse is not tolerated; where everyone can expect equality and respect in their relationships; and live free from domestic abuse."

Values - **Survivor centred- women**, children, and those sharing protected characteristics are at the centre of all of our actions using a trauma informed approach.

Strengthens based approach - that recognises all survivor has done to keep herself and her children safe, whilst managing his behaviour.

Survivor led - To sit with her and go at her pace, making decisions with her and not for her.

Accountability: recognising all the actions perps take to abuse including using children to control, post separation abuse and hold them accountable



Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Priority 5	Priority 6
Whole Systems Approach Making DA everybody's business. All partners working collectively and collaboratively as a network, to respond to and prevent DA. Recognising its complexity and integral role each partner plays in the system.	Prevention- Changing Attitudes and behaviours Culture change across the life course through education, awareness and understanding. A culture change and empowered practice across organisations; public, private and voluntary.	Prevention - Early identification and help Focus on early identification of the signs of abuse and strengthening first responses from all professionals to prevent escalation of risk and harm. Embedding an early help offer of DA in the universal space like family hubs, gp's, etc.	Children and young people are protected Raising awareness & understanding Healthy relationships. Identify and support children and young people affected by domestic abuse, including supporting young people in abusive relationships.	Safety Support and Recovery Keeping survivors and their children safe is paramount concern. Commissioning quality assured support to survivors in safe accommodation as per Part 4 DA Act duty. Developing a longer term offer to aid recovery.	Hold perpetrators to account Develop an intervention pathway that sets out a range of actions that holds perpetrators to account at every opportunity across the system.

Question

a) Under each priority we set out "what we will do". Are these the right focus to address the issues/challenges?

b) If not, what should we have?



Priority 1 – Whole System: Leadership, Partnership & Workforce



In line with the Domestic Abuse Act we have established a Domestic Abuse Strategic Board who will lead and drive forward progress made against the key priorities and ensure robust communication links with other strategic groups. It will deliver a co-produced, robust, co-ordinated community response to domestic abuse across the strategic partnerships and plan effective use of resources to improve outcomes.

Those subjected to domestic abuse, predominantly women and children, interact with multiple professionals in their day-to-day lives. This network of agencies across the city creates the whole system, and requires a consistent, coordinated response to domestic abuse.

What we will do:

- ✓ Track and monitor our collective progress against set actions in the detailed action plan to demonstrate improvement or highlight any gaps in effectiveness.
- ✓ Develop a consistent, systematic process for collecting and sharing domestic abuse data and insight across the partnership to inform our strategic direction and action plan. This will also assist in understanding of demand, diverse characteristics and unmet need and used to inform service developments, future commissioning intentions and aim to remove any identified barrier to accessing support.
- ✓ Conduct multi-agency audits to consider the qualitative impact of progress made against the key priorities and the difference that this has made to the lives of survivors and their children.
- ✓ Ensure lessons learnt from Domestic Homicide Reviews, child and adult Serious case reviews (which include aspects of domestic abuse) are shared with organisations and are jointly considered at senior partnership level and learning is cascaded throughout the partnership.
- ✓ Design domestic abuse good practice guidance for staff, drawing on the WM DA standards and the knowledge of specialist DA sector.

GDPA



Priority 3 Prevention- Early identification and Help

Clear focus on early identification of the signs of abuse and strengthening first responses from all professionals to prevent escalation of risk and harm. Embedding an early help offer of domestic abuse in the universal space like family hubs and health settings.

What we will do:

- ✓ Develop a clear understanding of early help and early intervention. Early help sits in the universal space like youth settings and GPs to raise awareness of domestic abuse and specialist support available. Early intervention is generally used to mean additional, targeted support that occurs around a specific issue like domestic abuse, but which is not at a high enough threshold or level for a statutory response.
- ✓ Embed routine enquiry and professional curiosity to recognise signs of domestic abuse at an early stage, and act appropriately.
- ✓ Additional focus on groups at higher risk, e.g. pregnant women or those with other vulnerabilities.
- ✓ Embed an approach that ensures that risk assessment and safety planning is an ongoing process and part of every interaction with the survivor, to help prevent the escalation of risk, recognising that risk is dynamic.
- ✓ Consider ways to increase the amount of community support available to enable survivors to stay safely in their own homes surrounded by their own support networks.
- ✓ Seek training from specialists to understand barriers faced by certain communities, and how to support in a culturally competent way.
- ✓ Foster a culture where survivors feel they can safely disclose domestic abuse at an early stage, knowing that they will be listened to and believed.



Priority 5 - Safety, Support and Recovery



Ensuring that survivors and their children are kept safe and are supported through good quality assured specialist support both in safe accommodation as per Part 4 DA Act duty and in a community setting. Develop a longer term offer to aid recovery.

What we will do:

- ✓ Commission quality assured specialist support for survivors and their children in safe accommodation, that meets their complex needs, based on needs assessment, data insight and intelligence from the market, including specialist DA sector to inform our commissioning intentions.
- ✓ Work with specialist providers and agencies to consider missed or earlier opportunities to intervene to support survivors and prevent escalation risk.
- ✓ Review standard and medium risk cases to inform development of the offer at these levels, to prevent escalation of abuse and enable people to live in safety.
- ✓ Ensure that safe housing options are available to respond to the needs of survivors with additional needs, for example limited physical mobility, learning needs or caring responsibilities. This will also be inclusive of people who are moving in and out of the city, those with more complex vulnerabilities, people with protected characteristics and male victims.
- ✓ Ensure that survivors have easy access to practical advice and support to move on with their lives when they move from specialist accommodation.
- ✓ Increase the amount of community support available to enable survivors to stay safely in their own homes surrounded by their own support networks but within the context of managing risk.
- ✓ Ensure professionals understand links between domestic abuse and suicide and offer timely appropriate support for mental health.
- ✓ Ensure that holistic support to recover following the abuse is given, recognising wider needs such as mental health or financial support.



Priority 2 Prevention- Changing attitudes and behaviours.

Everyone must address and reduce attitudes that blame the survivor and are judgemental and hold the abuser accountable as the sole person responsible for the abuse. Increasing understanding across partnership that domestic abuse is solely the fault of the perpetrator.

What we will do:

- ✓ Develop and implement a comprehensive partnership communication and marketing strategy to raise the profile and awareness of domestic abuse through different mediums: campaigns, toolkits, social media, digital media, ensuring consistent and appropriate communication messages around domestic abuse.
- ✓ Deliver partnership training to encourage staff at all levels to be professionally curious, recognising early signs of abuse, coercive and controlling behaviours, and how to respond sensitively and signpost to specialist DA providers.
- ✓ Recognise the key role that our specialist providers play in supporting survivors and work with them in developing our approach to prevention.
- ✓ A life course approach on healthy relationships, from pregnancy to post parent age.
- ✓ Increasing knowledge of domestic abuse within the community and with family, friends and employers, being able to recognise domestic abuse and know how to access specialist support and advice for survivors, children and young people.
- ✓ Enable staff to access training in trauma informed practice and to understand the additional complexities facing those women with protected characteristics and the additional barriers they face.
- ✓ A robust and consistent approach to domestic abuse through education of healthy relationships in all schools, colleges and university enabling more children and young people to grow up developing an understanding of what makes a healthy relationship.
- ✓ Changing attitudes of key partners in the system – not victim blaming, embedding anti racist practice, challenging misogyny and holding perpetrators to account.



Priority 4 - Children and young people are protected from the effects of domestic abuse



Work as a partnership to identify and support children and young people affected by domestic abuse, including supporting young people in abusive relationships.

What we will do:

- ✓ Ensure there is specialist children's support across the pathway, from prevention through to crisis.
- ✓ Increase access to support services in the community for children and young people as well as in safe accommodation.
- ✓ Ensuring that all services are supportive of the non-abusive parent and recognise all of the actions they take to keep their child safe, whilst recognising that an abusive parent cannot be a good parent.
- ✓ Roll out of Operation Encompass, a process that informs schools of domestic abuse incidents so they can offer early support to children who have been affected.
- ✓ Increase awareness and understanding of domestic abuse and the severe impact it has on children and young people including anxiety, feeling guilty for the abuse and low self-esteem. Increase awareness and understanding of healthy relationships and the support available.
- ✓ Raise awareness and understanding of what to expect from a relationship, based on equality and respect in all settings including schools, colleges, universities.
- ✓ Carry out reviews on the implementation of domestic abuse in RSHE across our schools, considering the quality of teaching and the impact it has had on our young people.
- ✓ Provide information and advice from pregnancy through to early years via the Family Hub Programme.
- ✓ Closer collaboration with mental health support team and CAMHS.



Priority 6 - Hold perpetrators to account



Develop an intervention pathway that sets out a range of actions that holds perpetrators to account at every opportunity across the system rather than rely on a single agency to do this. This should span the continuum of domestic abuse ranging from civil injunctions, DAPO's, DVPO's, to criminal convictions and offender management.

What we will do:

- ✓ Ensure partners continue to share appropriate information regarding risk of perpetrators – to work to keep survivors and their children safe.
- ✓ Ensure that any support for the survivor recognises the perpetrator as the person solely responsible for the abuse, and all language used reflects this.
- ✓ Deliver a survivor informed approach to perpetrator interventions that ensures that whilst he is appropriately challenged, the safety of women and children remains our paramount concern, as we know risk increases when she reaches out for help or attempts to leave.
- ✓ Develop a shared vision, where all partners recognise the need to work more collaboratively to hold perpetrators to account for their behaviour. Using learning from DHR's and child and adult serious case reviews.
- ✓ Work with specialist providers and agencies to consider missed or earlier opportunities to intervene to hold perpetrators to account.
- ✓ Empower frontline staff through specialist training to challenge the abusive actions that perpetrators commit, recognising the impact of the actions and behaviour and understand that domestic abuse is a choice, and not a result of e.g., substance addiction or mental health. Whilst keeping the safety of women and children at the forefront.

Note: Concern that the lack of specialist interventions for high-risk/high-harm perpetrators means that in some circumstances, safety planning where there are children at risk of harm/significant harm is less effective and may lead to greater emphasis on the non-abusive parent.

Draft DA strategy - The consultation and engagement plan

Where	How
Internal: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cabinet Member briefings, marketplace• Senior Management team meetings• Boards including Safeguarding , Improvement & Social Justice Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide briefings in person• Briefing note• Where needed, signpost to Be Heard survey
External: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commissioned providers and grant funded orgs• Survivors• Partner engagement e.g. WMP, ICB etc both internally and with their citizen groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workshop with providers to facilitate feedback• Providers to facilitate directly with survivors in their service and capture feedback• Key partners lead on engagement with their senior management and capture feedback
Wider public: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members of the public• Citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BeHeard survey to be distributed through wider corporate comms, BVSC weekly bulletin, and partners

- Consolidate feedback and amend accordingly
- Approval to be sought from DA Board, submission to Cabinet in February 2024, for April approval