

Report from the Cabinet Member Health and Social Care

TITLE: **Birmingham Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2018 - 2023**

1. Introduction

1.1 The attached "Towards A Domestic Abuse Free City: Birmingham Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2018 - 2023" sets out a direction for the city's approach to tackling and preventing domestic abuse. The new strategy has been developed through dialogue and support from a wide range of stakeholders including people with lived experience of domestic abuse, Birmingham Community Safety Partnership, Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board, West Midlands Police, elected members and providers of domestic abuse services across public, private and third sectors.

2. Background and Key Issues

2.1 The Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy replaces the Birmingham Violence Against Women Strategy 2013-2015 and forms part of the Council's Policy Framework to deliver against priority themes:

- Children: The strategy delivers a clear focus to support children touched by all forms of domestic abuse, complementing the **Birmingham Early Help Strategy 2015 - 2017**.
- Housing: The strategy is timely to support the new **Birmingham Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017+** recognising families who experience domestic abuse as being the second highest presenting reason for households in priority need.
- Jobs and Skills: The strategy will deliver the first Birmingham Domestic Abuse Prevention workplace standard, linking to the Combined Authority work on the Public Health England Workplace Wellbeing Charter.
- Health: The strategy aligns to the **Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017** recognising the need to tackle domestic abuse to improve the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable adults and children.

2.2 The strategy also supports work being led by the Council and its partners regard:

- The **Birmingham Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017** recognising families who experience domestic abuse are amongst those most vulnerable to financial hardship, exclusion and poverty.
- The agreed purpose for **Improved Mental Health in Birmingham 2016** because tackling domestic abuse is key to improving the population's mental health wellbeing.

3. Strategy Approach and Themes

3.1 The strategy adopts the Government definition of domestic abuse, is informed by the latest national policy direction and provides Birmingham's vision to see the city as a place where domestic abuse is not tolerated; where everyone can expect equality and respect in their relationships, and live free from domestic abuse. The vision will enable strategic partnerships and other stakeholders to work differently to better co-ordinate services that focus on: changing attitudes and behaviours; deliver early identification and early help, and

provide safety and support. This refreshed approach will be delivered through the Domestic Abuse Joint Action Plan as detailed in the strategy.

- 3.2 The strategy sets out a high level framework identifying the thematic change required to better respond to and prevent domestic abuse. The framework was scoped and developed taking note of the views expressed during extensive consultation with the public and with cross sector stakeholders who identified the following themes to form Birmingham's Domestic Abuse Joint Action Plan:
- a) Changing Attitudes – successfully Changing Attitudes means preventing domestic abuse by challenging the attitudes and behaviours that foster it.
 - b) Early Identification and Early Help – successful Early Identification and Early Help means intervening early to prevent harm and reduce the impact of domestic abuse on victims and families.
 - c) Safety and Support – successful Safety and Support means ensuring that those individuals experiencing domestic abuse are protected from harm and are supported to recover.
- 3.3 Strategic oversight will be owned by the Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board and Birmingham Community Safety Partnership who have joint responsibility for and are committed to ensuring Birmingham's vision for the prevention of domestic abuse becomes reality.

Motion

That the Birmingham Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2018 - 2023 (Appendix 1) is approved as the City Council's new domestic abuse strategy and that the Corporate Director of Place be authorised to publish and disseminate the document as appropriate.