



# Doncaster Council

## Report

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Date: 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**To the Chair and Members of the  
CABINET**

### **DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY**

<b>Relevant Cabinet Member(s)</b>	<b>Wards Affected</b>	<b>Key Decision</b>
Councillor Rachael Blake	All	Yes

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report provides information about the new 2021-2024 Domestic Abuse Strategy (in Appendix A). The strategy has been through an extensive consultation process and is being presented to Cabinet, for endorsement.

### **EXEMPT REPORT**

2. This is not an exempt report.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. Members of Cabinet are asked to note and approve the content of the new Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024 (in Appendix A).

### **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?**

4. This partnership Strategy reflects the co-ordinated response to domestic abuse in Doncaster, led by the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership (SSDP). One of the most important aspects of responding effectively to domestic abuse is that it cannot be achieved by any single agency operating in isolation.
5. The delivery of the strategy will help to reduce incidents of domestic abuse, support adult and child victims and survivors to deal with the trauma they

suffered and hold abusers to account, while also supporting them to change their behaviour through a trauma informed response.

## **BACKGROUND**

6. Following the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act in April 2021, local authorities are now required by law to have a local domestic abuse partnership board and produce a strategy, give effect to that strategy and provide updates to the Government.
7. The Doncaster domestic abuse strategy sets out a coordinated community and whole family response to domestic abuse, ensuring that it is everyone's responsibility. It sets out clear objectives which we believe will make a difference.
8. The strategy was developed using a comprehensive needs assessment (Appendix B) and following an extensive and successful consultation exercise.
9. Bridging the gap between strategy and action is crucial and so the strategy is accompanied by a performance management framework, a quality assurance framework (Appendix C) and a multi-agency action plan.
10. The strategy focuses upon four priorities:
  - Prevent and ultimately end domestic abuse
  - Support and keep victims, survivors & families
  - Holding abusers to account
  - Leadership, governance and quality assurance
11. The strategy, action plan (Appendix E) and performance and quality assurance frameworks (Appendix C) will be managed by the Doncaster domestic abuse partnership, which consists of a strategic board and an operational board.

## **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

12. As it is now a statutory requirement, there is no option but to produce a domestic abuse strategy and to publish that strategy by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021.
13. The strategy was produced following extensive consultation with partner organisations, the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership, the Doncaster Safeguarding Boards, elected members and survivors of domestic abuse, to ensure that there is universal support for and ownerships of the strategy.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

14. The production of the strategy is a statutory requirement.

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

15.

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	<p><b>Doncaster Working:</b> Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li> <li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li> <li>• Inward Investment</li> </ul>	<p>The largest element of domestic abuse cost is the physical and emotional harm suffered by the victims themselves (£47 billion). The next highest cost is for lost output relating to time taken off work and reduced productivity afterwards (£14 billion). (figures provided by <a href="#">UK Government</a>)</p> <p>By working to prevent domestic abuse and intervene at the earliest opportunity we will contribute towards a safer, stronger, more efficient and effective workforce.</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school</li> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better</li> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>	<p>The strategy will support the delivery of educational programmes in schools to raise awareness of healthy and unhealthy relationships to prevent domestic abuse and identify children that are currently living in abusive households.</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</li> </ul>	<p>The strategy will provide therapeutic trauma informed intervention for children who are victims of domestic abuse. By addressing the abuse and the trauma and helping children to thrive following their experience we will enable them to have a better start in life.</p> <p>Campaigns and intervention will also support older people to live free from abuse. On</p>

		<p>average, <a href="#">older victims experience abuse for twice as long before seeking help</a> as those aged under 61 and nearly half have a disability. Yet older clients are hugely underrepresented among domestic abuse services. The strategy ensures that there is safe accommodation for victims and families experiencing domestic abuse and that victims, survivors, children and perpetrators of abuse have the necessary support.</p>
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## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

16. The strategy identifies the areas for development and clear objectives to deliver a coordinated community and whole family response to domestic abuse.
17. There is a robust action plan, which is a working document and will be used in conjunction with the performance and quality assurance frameworks. By publishing the strategy on time, we remove any risks of non-compliance of the new Domestic Abuse Act 2021 statutory duties.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials:NC:30/7/2021]

18. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced a raft of new measures relating to the duties and approach to domestic abuse, including a duty to appoint a domestic abuse local partnership board. In particular, section 57 of the Act places a duty on Local Authorities to:
  - (i) assess, or make arrangements for the assessment of, the need for accommodation-based support in their area;
  - (ii) prepare, publish and give effect to a strategy for the provision of such support in its area; and
  - (iii) monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.
19. Before publishing a strategy in line with the above duty, the Authority is required to consult the domestic abuse local partnership and such other persons as it considers appropriate.
20. The Authority must keep the strategy under review, including any effect of the strategy on the provision of other local authority support in its area and may alter or replace the strategy.
21. The government are due to publish regulations and statutory guidance later this year, on the duties placed on Local Authorities under the Act that the Authority will have to comply with.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: NC Date: 29/07/2021]**

22. There are no specific financial implications relating to this report. Any costs arising over and above the approved budget as a result of the implementing the strategy, will need further approval.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials:SB Date: 30/07/2021]**

23. There are no HR impls associated with the endorsement of the strategy. There could be HR implications relating to the implementation of the strategy.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS Officer [Officer Initials:PW Date: 28/07/2021]**

24. There are no anticipated technology implications in relation to this report.

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: MM Date: 30/07/2021]**

25. Domestic abuse has an adverse impact on the health and wellbeing of affected individuals and families. The strategy partnership approach and the four strategy priorities will provide an improved response to domestic abuse and have positive impacts on the health and wellbeing of those affected.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials KS Date 15/09/2021]**

26. A Due Regard Statement (Appendix D) has been developed alongside the development of the strategy.

## **CONSULTATION**

27. There has been extensive consultation involved in the formulation of the strategy including with:

- Survivors of domestic abuse
- Residents
- Elected members
- Practitioners and community leaders
- Perpetrators of domestic abuse
- Young people

28. The strategy has been circulated for comment to:

- Members of the Domestic Abuse Chief Officer group
- Members of the domestic and sexual abuse theme group
- Members of the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership Executive Board
- Members of the Safeguarding Partnerships
- Members of the Community and Environment Scrutiny Panel Committee

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

29. Appendix A - Final draft of the Doncaster Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024
30. Appendix B - Domestic abuse needs assessment
31. Appendix C - Performance and quality assurance framework
32. Appendix D - Due Regard Statement
33. Appendix E – Domestic Abuse Action Plan

## **GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

SSDP – Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership

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