



To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 30th June 2021

Subject: Domestic Abuse Act 2021

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee of the requirements on the Council arising from the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination is recommended to:
- 1) Consider the content of the Cabinet report Domestic Abuse Act 2021 at Appendix 1
 - 2) Contribute to, support, and consider the needs assessment being undertaken to identify the need for domestic support in the area
 - 3) Add the work of the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board to the work programme at an appropriate time
 - 4) Identify any further recommendations to the appropriate Cabinet Member

3 Background and Information

- 3.1 Cabinet received a report on the 15th June, outlining the implications of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and agreed the following recommendations
- i. Approve the proposal to create The Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board as a statutory board of the local authority.
 - ii. Approve acceptance of the grant of £849,930 in 2021/2022 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to fulfil the functions of the new statutory duty on Tier 1 Local Authorities relating to the provision of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children residing within safe accommodation.
 - iii. Note the Council's new duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- 3.2 This report is attached at Appendix 1

- 3.3 Domestic abuse is a manifestation of one-person (or persons) exerting power and control over another with whom they share a personal connection. Domestic abuse can take many forms including, but not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. It also includes honour-based violence, forced marriage, other culturally recognised forms of abuse and a range of controlling and coercive behaviours. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 also highlights economic abuse.
- 3.4 Preventing harm from Domestic Abuse is a priority within Coventry and is a key measure within the One Coventry Corporate Plan. Coventry's Domestic Abuse Strategy 2018 – 2023 outlines the city's approach to addressing domestic abuse, including honour-based violence and forced marriage.
- 3.5 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act provides, for the first time, a statutory definition of domestic abuse and delivers a number of significant changes to improve the protection of victims within the community and the criminal justice system.
- 3.6 The Act has a number of implications for the local authority, including the requirement of a new statutory board, implementation of a statutory definition of domestic abuse, a duty to produce regular needs assessments and strategies, delivery of specific minimum types of support for victims within safe accommodation, the prioritisation of domestic abuse victims within homelessness applications and a requirement to annually report to the Secretary of State.
- 3.7 S2 Analytics have been commissioned to undertake the Coventry Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment. This work commenced late April. They will also be producing 2 strategy addenda for the current Domestic Abuse Strategy 2018-2023. The first is in response to statutory obligations with regards to support to those who are in domestic abuse accommodation. The second will focus on domestic abuse and the impact of COVID-19.
- 3.8 A number of activities will underpin this work. This includes surveys for communities and partners/practitioners, one to one discussions and focus groups. An interim report on findings should be available in July to help inform service delivery and development. The surveys are attached at Appendix 2 and 3.

4 Health Inequalities Impact Assessment

- 4.1 Duties under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 were discharged during the re-procurement of safe accommodation services in 2019, including the completion of an Equality Consultation Analysis. Moving forward, the needs of people with protected characteristics will be re-assessed as part of the needs' assessment required from the Act.

Gennie Holmes
Scrutiny Co-ordinator
gennie.holmes@coventry.gov.uk
024 7697 1857