

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy – Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

Report to Cabinet to be considered as part of the public consultation.

Background

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 9 November 2022 to consider the consultation draft Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy. The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Commissioning and Strategy Lead, Shirley Beauchamp, outlined the submitted Strategy (Policy Framework document) and responded to questions on the following:
 - the need for a cultural change and education from an early age as well as adults so that people can recognise what was good and not good in a relationship;
 - what work was being done to listen to the voice of the perpetrator to understand why they have behaved in a certain way, it may have been that they were victims of abuse themselves or have other problems and may need to be supported themselves;
 - how close the Domestic Abuse Team worked with the Drugs and Alcohol Team to see if they can recognise victims when working with their clients;
 - the need to ensure support for people who have suffered from historic sexual abuse;
 - the importance of a supportive approach so that victims know that people will believe them and support them;
 - the use of acronyms within the Strategy and the importance of a glossary of terms to help people to understand them; and
 - how do we challenge our partners, social landlords and others so that they can learn to spot signs and refer or report the issue to the appropriate agency.

The Board acknowledged that training was provided to Council staff and Councillors on safeguarding, by stander and domestic abuse but felt that more could be done to challenge our partners and our communities to encourage everyone to report any areas of concern.

2. The Board reflected and debated the information provided to them, both in writing and orally and formed the following recommendation to the Cabinet. On being put to the vote, the motion was declared carried unanimously.

3. That the Cabinet be recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Board supports the draft Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy, subject to the inclusion of a glossary of terms.