



Equality Impact Assessment Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2019- 2024

Section 1: Equality analysis details

Proposed policy/decision/business plan to which this equality analysis relates	Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2019-2024
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Department	Housing and Modernisation	Division	Communities
Period analysis undertaken	2017 - 2019		

Section 2: Brief description of policy/decision/business plan

1.1 Brief description of policy/decision/business plan This is Southwark's first Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. The development of a Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy covering the period 2019-2024 is one of the directives of the Southwark Council Plan for 2019. The Strategy will inform future commissioning decisions..

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is defined as:

“Any act of gender – based violence that results in , or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life “

VAWG is a cause and effect of inequality and impacts negatively on all the protective characteristics of the Equality Act, 2010..

VAWG brings together multiple forms of serious violence under a single policy strand.

- Crimes committed in the name of “honour”
- Domestic Abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced Marriage
- Sexual Violence, abuse, exploitation and rape
- Stalking
- Harassment
- Trafficking for sexual exploitation
- Prostitution

National Context: In 2010, the Government published the cross government Strategy “Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls”¹ which detailed a series of actions plans to address VAWG across all agencies. This has been followed by “The National Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, 2016 – 2021”² . The Government strategy introduced a new National Statement of Expectations. The strategy reiterated the framework of prevention, provision of Services, partnership working and perpetrators as the model to tackle VAWG. It also created a number of opportunities for all responsible authorities to address VAWG, which included a new dedicated VAWG funding stream, the VAWG Service Transformation Fund.

1. ¹ <http://www.gov.uk>

2. ² <http://www.gov.uk>

Regional Context. The Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) published its strategic vision in “A Safer City for Woman and Girls”. The London Tackling Violence Against Woman and Girls Strategy, 2018 – 2021³ which detailed a framework for London to be at the global forefront of tackling VAWG.

Tackling VAWG is a national and regional strategic priority. The format of Partnership, Prevention, Perpetrators and Protection is supported by the Government as the most effective framework to address VAWG. This model has been incorporated into this Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

Southwark’s current response to VAWG is weighted toward domestic abuse (DA). This is a proportionate response as DA is the volume crime and Southwark has the 4th highest volume of recorded DA offences in London⁴

In Southwark in the 12 months to January 2019 the Police recorded 3,487 Domestic Abuse Offences. This was the 4th highest in the London Metropolitan Police Area (includes the City) and a 10% increase on the previous year.

Southwark has a Domestic abuse incident rate of 18 per 1,000 population, which places us 11th highest in London, the highest being 23 in Barking and Dagenham and lowest 11 in Richmond upon Thames. Greenwich (21), Lewisham (20) and Lambeth (16)

The Southwark Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) which puts action plans in place to manage high risk cases of domestic abuse received a total of 609 referrals between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019, an average of 51 per month. This compares to 551 in 2017/18, an average of 46 per month, an increase of 10%

VAWG is cross cutting issue which impacts upon all areas of the Council’s work. To ensure successful delivery of effective and efficient monitoring and scrutiny of Southwark activity around forms of gender based violence. The implementation of this strategy will be overseen by the Violence Against Women and Girls Project Board.

3. ³ <https://www.london.gov.uk>

4 <https://www.london.gov.uk>

Section 3: Overview of service users and key stakeholders consulted

2. Service users and stakeholders

<p>Key users of the department or service</p>	<p>People affected by serious violent crimes which disproportionately affect women and girls. These are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crimes committed in the name of “honour” • Female genital mutilation (FGM) • Forced Marriage • Sexual Violence, abuse, exploitation, and rape • Stalking • Harassment • Trafficking for sexual exploitation • Prostitution
<p>Key stakeholders were/are involved in this policy/decision/business plan</p>	<p>In developing the strategy a service user consultaion was conducted with 20 women using the services of Bede. In addition, 39 stakeholders across the partnership were consulted with. This included representatives from the Adults Safeguarding Board, Children’s Safeguarding Boards, the Police and specialist support services</p>

Section 4: Pre-implementation equality analysis

Age
<p>VAWG affects people of all age groups including unborn children who are also at risk of harm, through acts of abuse directed at their mothers.</p> <p>The findings of the recent scrutiny report into VAWG commissioned by Southwark elected members made a number of recommendations relating to sexual harassment that is aimed at young people, Modern Slavery and Trafficking and for a review of Southwark’s Womens Safety Charter⁵</p> <p>The impact on children and young people is acknowledged in the strategy and we work closely with Children’s Social Care to address specific areas that affect young people including child sexual exploitation and sexual violence within a gang or group situation.</p> <p>It is estimated that 42% of the population of Southwark are between 20-39 years of age⁶.</p> <p>An identified gap relates to the prevalence of VAWG experienced by people over the</p>

⁵ LB Southwark. Making Southwark a safe place fro EVERYBODY. Violence Against Women and Gorgs (VAWG) AND Modern Day Slavery. Community Safety Scrutiny Commission Report. May 2019

⁶ Census 2011

age of 50 in Southwark. Data from our commissioned services shows that in Q4 2018/19 there were 232 survivors aged between 50-71 years accounting for 11.7% of all cases for the year.

The available data shows that the majority of survivors in receipt of services are primarily for domestic abuse victims aged 16 and above (in line with the Home Office definition). There is a need to ensure that future service provision responds to the wider forms of VAWG and that there is appropriate support across age ranges. However, it is important to acknowledge that children are often the witness to these incidents of violence in the home and elsewhere and future service delivery responses must include wraparound services for survivors irrespective of age.

Equality information on which above analysis is based

The Southward Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2017-2019
Metropolitan Police Crime Data 2018-19
Commissioned Services Data 2018-19

Mitigating actions to be taken

All ages groups are at risk of gender based violence and the strategy acknowledges there is a requirement to work across age ranges to identify and support those at risk of harm. Targeted work will be developed to ensure Southwarks multi- agency response to VAWG reaches all ages groups.

Disability - A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

National research highlights that people with long term illness disabled women are at a higher risk of victimisation than people without. There is further evidence that the impact of VAWG and trauma on children affects children's wellbeing significantly⁷. In addition, the finding of the review into Domestic Homicide Reviews has found that there is a correlation between Domestic Abuse, Substance Abuse and Mental Health in relation to perpetrators of these deaths.

Information from Southwark's commissioned services shows that x% 30.52% (626) of the women using the service in 2018/19 were affected by domestic abuse have experienced significant trauma and live with ongoing anxiety and post traumatic stress.

Data from Southwark MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) for high risk victims of domestic abuse highlights that 60 victims with disabilities were referred into the Southwark MARAC

⁷ DFID Guidance Note: Part B Practical Guidance: Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls in Education Programming. May 2014

Equality information on which above analysis is based

Safe Lives. Disabled Survivors Too: Disabled people and domestic abuse. 2017.
LB Southwark. Commissioned Services Data 2018/19
Home Office. Domestic Homicide Review: Key Findings From the Analysis of
Domestic Homicide Reviews. Dec 2016
Southwark MARAC data 2018/19

Mitigating actions to be taken

There is further work to be done with SLaM to ensure that victims of any form of VAWG and who are high risk are referred into Southwark MARAC and both victims and perpetrators affected are aware of the support available in Southwark.

Commissioned services will work in partnership with established disability groups to raise awareness of gender based violence and provide advice and support.

In 2019, four concurrent domestic homicide reviews are being conducted in Southwark. The findings will be used to shape Southwark's future response to tackling domestic abuse

Gender reassignment - The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

The strategy acknowledges the needs of transgender people, how they define their gender and choose services that are appropriate to their needs. There is a need for further training in this area to organisations within the borough. We are aware that there may be under reporting from the transgender community. During 2018/19, there were 20 cases to MARAC where the victim identified as LGBT+ . This data does not clarify how many of these identified as gender reassignment

Equality information on which above analysis is based

Southwark MARAC Data

Mitigating actions to be taken

Southwark will work with GALOP to improve the offer to those affected by gender violence who identify as transgender. This may include public awareness campaigns and work with Regulatory Services.

Marriage and civil partnership – In England and Wales marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples and must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters. **(Only to be considered in respect to the need to eliminate discrimination.)**

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

The VAWGS seeks to support all people regardless of marital status. However, for

some, marriage is synonymous with abuse specifically Forced marriage where the victim is often subjected to sexual violence and rape

Current service provision in Southwark remains the same regardless of marital status, It is known that individuals, particularly women, living in couples (married or cohabiting) or who have decided to separate from their partners are more likely to be a victims of domestic abuse. Relationship breakdown is identified as a significant indicator of risk in homicide reviews

Equality information on which above analysis is based

We do not appears to collect data on relationship status at present

Pregnancy and maternity –

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

This is a high risk group in relation to domestic abuse with pregnancy and maternity being a significant risk factor for victimisation. There is a ongoing need for capacity in maternity and both pre and post natal services to identify risks and refer appropriately to relevant support services.

The Home Office have suggested that 70% of teenage mothers are in a violent relationship⁸

It is estimated that the prevalence rate of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Southwark is 7x the national rate among 15 – 49 year olds.⁹ This can present health issues for women when giving birth,

Equality information on which above analysis is based

[https:// www.Southwark.gov.uk](https://www.Southwark.gov.uk)> JSNA 2018

Mitigating actions to be taken

Health and Southwark Safeguarding Boards will continue to lead on aspects of care relating to maternity. Where a crime is committed the Police will intervene. Southwark Council will continue to include pregnancy and maternity as a risk factor when addressing gender based violence. We will target young mums know to the Family Nurse Partnership to ensure they are aware of the support available in the borough. We will work with practicing communities (FGM) in line with regional good practice.

Race - Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins. N.B. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller are recognised racial groups and their needs should be considered alongside all others

⁸ Home Office VAWG EIA. 2011

⁹ <https://www.southwark.gov.uk>

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

Southwark is a richly diverse borough with 52% of the population belong to a white ethnicity group, with 48% of the population representing a Black, Asian or Minority ethnic (BAME)group. As there are 306, 745 people estimated to live in Southwark there are 147, 238 people in Southwark

Data from commissioned services show that of the 1982 using the service in 2018/19. The ethnicity of 116 was not established but 803 were of white backgrounds and the rest (919) were from BAME. backgrounds. MARAC data for the period shows that 301 of the 609 high risk cases were of BAME ethnic .

Some forms of gender based violence affect specific communities BAME groups more significantly, this includes; Dowry crime; Honour Based Violence; Female Genital Mutilation; Forced Marriage.

Although, some traditional practices are often associated BAME communities. It is evident that forced marriage and honour based violence occurs within Irish traveler communities.

However, there is little evidence that any of these occur in Southwark due to our current data limitations.

We are committed to supporting all victims of gender based violence. Southwark will need to ensure that commissioned services are access services that offer variety for the cultural difference's of the residents in Southwark are supported

Equality information on which above analysis is based

Southwark MARAC
Southwark Commissioned Services Data

Mitigating actions to be taken

There is a need to deliver specific programmes of work, referral pathways and toolkits to tackle Harmful Practices aimed at both in the communities and to staff.

Religion and belief - Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

Information that could be useful for strategic analysis and service provision is currently underdeveloped in Southwark. Qualitative research shows that individuals with particular religious beliefs are more likely to be victims of certain forms of hate crime, However, there is a strong correlation between some forms of gender violence with a belief in spirit possession. This was evident in the 2010 murder of Kristy Bamu in Newham. Highlighting some aspects of inter family violence that are often misunderstood

Equality information on which above analysis is based

None available

Mitigating actions to be taken

The changing dimension of faith in Southwark due to its populations may require specialist services with language skills working in local community settings. There are clear gaps in data and reporting that need to be addressed and the partnership will be taking steps to engage with people from all religious groups and those with no religious belief to address the gaps.

Southwark will work with Faith Leaders who are a bridge to Communities. Southwark will also work with specialist organisation including AFRUCA to ensure links between gender based violence and belief in Spirit possession are sufficiently understood by frontline staff.

Sex - A man or a woman

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

Both men and women can be victims and/or perpetrators of VAWG. However, it is the disproportionate number of women whom are victims that impact on gender inequality and is the reason the majority of our response must reflect needs for services for the impact of violence on women due to gender inequality..

Although the term VAWG may seem to preclude and/or deny that men can be victims of the ranges of violent crimes termed VAWG (with the exception of Female Genital Mutilation). This is not the case, but there may be a perception that this is so. This is ameliorated by ensuring the equality data captures male and female victim and perpetrator information.

Equality information on which above analysis is based

Data form Commissioned Services

Mitigating actions to be taken

All victims will be supported in Southwark. Future communications will include information on services for male victims.

Sexual orientation - Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

There is minimal data available the sexual orientation of victims or perpetrators of gender based violence. However, data from our domestic abuse commissioned service confirms that 95.41 % of service users/victims were female and 4.49% were male and 0% were transgender. Of these, 92.43% (1832) identified as heterosexual In terms of perpetrators 94.55 % were male and 5.45 % were female with 0% transgender.

Data from Southwark's MARAC shows of the 609 high risk cases heard in 2018/19. There were 20 LGBT cases, 34 male victims and 575 female victims. However, information on sexual orientation is not recorded.

Whilst there is no dedicated LGBT service for victims of DV in Southwark. There are a number of regional services who work with victims regardless of sexual orientation.

Equality information on which above analysis is based

Southwark MARAC

Data from Southwark Commissioned Services

Mitigating actions to be taken

Southwark will continue to strive to protect victims irrespective of sexual orientation through our work to reach all groups.

Socio-economic disadvantage – although the Equality Act 2010 does not include socio-economic status as one of the protected characteristics, Southwark Council recognises that this continues to be a major cause of inequality in the borough.

Socio economic status is the measure of an area's, an individual's or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education, health, living conditions and occupation.

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

The Mayors Office for Policing and Crime has identified low income as a driver for gender based violence¹⁰, Information from Southwark's Strategic Assessment highlights Camberwell Green and Peckham as areas with high levels of domestic abuse.¹¹

Those single women with the status of No Recourse to Public Funds are another group that are disadvantaged and have significant challenges to access support to safety. Although the Police will respond to incidents and cases are referred to MARAC for safety planning. Due to their immigration status this group are not eligible public funds or for national assistance and will not qualify for any financial or housing support. Some Women's Aid refuges will take up to two women a year but do not receive funding to do so.

Drug and alcohol use: People who use drugs and alcohol have higher risk of domestic abuse and sexual assault compare to those who had not. Six percent of victims of sexual assaults reported that the offender had drugged them during the last incident of sexual assault they experienced¹².

The demographics of Southwark means there are relatively high levels of vulnerability within the borough's population including high levels of mental health and substance misuse as well as those with language support needs. Victims with additional vulnerabilities have more barriers to seeking help.

We work closely with specialist organisations to support other groups who are less

¹⁰ <https://www.MOPAC/VAWG> Press Release May 2019

¹¹ <https://www.southwark.gov.uk> >Southwark Community Safety Strategic Assessment, 2017-2019

¹² [https:// Home Office.gov.uk](https://HomeOffice.gov.uk)

likely to seek help including no recourse to public funds and those experiencing multiple disadvantage (homelessness, complex drug and alcohol use, offending, sex work and mental health issues). Going forward there is a need to ensure that all specialist services funded by the council have speakers of the key languages spoken and awareness of the different ethnic groups in Southwark.

There is also a need to ensure connectivity between commissioned services and the specialist support services working with communities and those with multiple disadvantages.

The Mayors Office for Policing and Crime has identified low income as a driver for gender based

Equality information on which above analysis is based

Data from Southwark PAUSE

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk> >Southwark Community Safety Strategic Assessment, 2017-2019

Mitigating actions to be taken

Southwark will continue to develop its response to VAWG and will continue to ensure that all victims are supported to safety

Human Rights

There are 16 rights in the Human Rights Act. Each one is called an Article. They are all taken from the European Convention on Human Rights. The Articles are The right to life, Freedom from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, Freedom from forced labour , Right to Liberty, Fair trial, Retrospective penalties, Privacy, Freedom of conscience, Freedom of expression, Freedom of assembly, Marriage and family, Freedom from discrimination and the First Protocol

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

VAWG is a cause and effect of gender inequality¹³ . There are no negative impacts for the Council in coming into line with national and regional policy. It can only enhance the Councils Public Equality Duty.

Equality information on which above analysis is based

World Health Organisation 2017

Mitigating actions to be taken

Southwark will implement the Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, 2019-2024. This will require firm leadership and a commitment to change management, workforce development and revised commissioning approach.

Section 5: Further actions and objectives

5. Further actions

¹³ <https://www.who.org>.

Based on the initial analysis above, please detail the key mitigating actions or the areas identified as requiring more detailed analysis.

Number	Description of issue	Action	Timeframe
1	Practitioner guidance to outline best practice approaches to responding to gender based violence (focused on different level of risk thresholds, pathways and service provision)	Development of a procedure for practitioner's clarifying pathways for support and best practice interventions for different types of gender based violence.	
2	Workforce training/gap analysis	Michael Scorer Workforce survey to capture gaps and future training needs	
	Communications Strategy	Provision of information and advice to a) raise awareness on gender based violence and support available b) targeted information around healthy relationships to challenge abusive practices which are undertaken in the guise of "honour and/or culture and or religion/belief and grooming/gang associated/modern slavery	
3	Improve data collection	Revision of data collection across partnership to capture information which would adequately inform equalities impact assessment For the other VAWG areas there are some challenges when capturing data to gain	

		<p>an accurate picture of the levels of VAWG in Southwark. These include under reporting by those affected, Home Office changes to the way MPS record these offences, and limited data capture on the wider forms of gender violence. What little data is available due to the hidden nature and stigma attached to VAWG the true prevalence is likely to be much higher.</p>	
4	<p>Target interventions for specific under represented groups in term of service take up (older victims/ male victims/ LGBT victims).</p>	<p>Service performance to identify under represented groups and agree/implement mitigating actions to respond. Equality action plans to be developed by commissioned service where gaps are identified.</p>	
5	<p>Develop a revised services delivery model including commissioned services</p>	<p>There is a need to ensure the future service delivery models responds to the wider VAWG agenda. This will include workforce development, tailored to their service needs. Public facing Southwark staff will need support to respond appropriately to VAWG presentations. Revised delivery will include developing clear referral pathways, awareness</p>	

		raising campaigns and revision of commissioned services	
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5. Equality objectives (for business plans)

Based on the initial analysis above, please detail any equality objectives that you will set for your division/department/service. Under the objective and measure column please state whether this objective is an existing objective or a suggested addition to the Council Plan.

Objective and measure	Lead officer	Current performance (baseline)	Targets	
			Year 1	Year 2