



Working with Communities to Prevent Relationship Violence

Violence
Relationship
Awareness
Young
Victims
Perpetrators
Communities
Education
Prevention
Behaviour
Parents

A report from Overview & Scrutiny





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Preface

By Councillor Mariam Khan

Chair of the Social Cohesion and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee



I would like to thank members of the Social Cohesion and Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee together with partners and organisations from across the City who have willingly given their time and effort to contribute to this Inquiry.

When we started this piece of work, I was mindful that the term relationship violence can be used to describe a wide range of behaviours which can include domestic violence and abuse, forced marriage, honour based violence and female genital mutilation. To do each of these topics full justice would require separate inquiries on each. However, the focus we decided to take was on how we can support communities to take a lead in preventing all forms of relationship violence.

Our recommendations therefore concentrate on how and where the City Council can support, assist and empower communities to tackle relationship violence, with the support of relevant statutory and third sector organisations.

The role of the City Council statutory organisations and voluntary and third sector agencies are of course important, and the Committee was pleased to learn about ongoing preventative work happening in schools and other educational establishments across the city – these play an important role in reinforcing what constitutes acceptable behaviour. It was also reassuring to hear from West Midlands Police about the significant advances in multi-agency arrangements for dealing with domestic violence, their domestic abuse teams which safeguard and protect victims and about their renewed focus on bringing perpetrators to justice through the criminal justice system.

However, it is for all of us in our communities to challenge the behaviours and attitudes that lead to relationship violence – that is how we will prevent it in the long term. We recognise that often people do not want to talk about these things or acknowledge that they are happening, and that sometimes some of these issues are seen as “culturally sensitive” and therefore should not be discussed. Such beliefs should be challenged within communities, who should have the confidence and support to do so. It is also important to help people to understand what options are available to support them if they find themselves – or someone they know – facing violence, coercion or abuse in their relationships.

It is hoped that the implementation of the recommendations in this report will go some way to tackling relationship violence and protecting and supporting victims and their families.



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Summary of Recommendations

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R01	<p>That the City Council encourages community-led preventative approaches within its own services and amongst its partner organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) involving working closely with community and voluntary organisations and faith groups; b) utilising and updating the most recent contact information about community champions and community leaders; c) mobilising communities and encouraging them to tackle attitudes to relationship violence with a view to preventing relationship violence and bringing about cultural change in the longer term. 	<p>Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing</p>	November 2015
R02	<p>That the City Council strengthens its leadership role for the city by reviewing the domestic violence strategy and enabling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) coherent pathways for victims and children, across sectors, to access the support and protection they need; b) strengthening the engagement of schools and other educational establishments, including academies, committing to participating; c) integrated working between Birmingham Youth Services and Think Family Team and Children's Services and homelessness; d) youth service providers from both statutory and third sector involvement in the delivery of informal education programmes with young people. 	<p>Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing</p>	November 2015



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	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R03	<p>That the City Council and its partners encourage schools and educational establishments to take a 'whole school approach' to children and young people developing positive relationships and provide guidance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the delivery of school based educational programmes and awareness campaigns aimed at educating young people about healthy relationships in both primary and secondary settings drawing on the expertise of the specialist domestic violence sector; b) working in partnership with youth service providers and in facilitating informal education delivery that promotes healthy relationships and brings about a change in attitudes to relationship violence; and c) working with parents to educate parents about attitudes to relationship violence. 	<p>Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services</p>	November 2015
R04	<p>That an assessment of progress against the recommendations made in this report be presented to the relevant O&S Committee</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety</p>	November 2015



1 Introduction

1.1 Focus of Inquiry

- 1.1.1 The members of this Inquiry set out to examine how the City Council and our partners and communities can work better together with all age groups to change attitudes and perceptions about healthy relationships and to help people to understand what to do if they face violence, coercion or abuse in their relationships.
- 1.1.2 The term relationship violence can be used to describe a wide range of crimes, many of which disproportionately affect women. These would include domestic violence and abuse, forced marriage, honour based violence or honour crime and female genital mutilation. Although the hidden nature of some of these crimes and the fact that they are significantly under-reported make it difficult to gather accurate data on prevalence rates, what is clear is that statutory bodies need to work together both effectively and collaboratively with communities in order to protect the most vulnerable from these crimes.
- 1.1.3 All of these areas constitute specialised topics in themselves, and as such would merit a separate Inquiry. For the purposes of this report, the Committee has not taken detailed evidence on forced marriage, honour based violence or female genital mutilation and, although some aspects have featured in evidence, they have been largely outside the scope of this report. These are important areas of work in themselves which may be picked up in future scrutiny inquiries.
- 1.1.4 As the title suggests, the focus of this Inquiry has been very much about prevention and early intervention and how this can be improved by more integrated working with communities. The focus of the evidence received by the Committee in this Inquiry has been on how statutory bodies, including health, the police and local authorities can increasingly work together to engage directly with communities to shift efforts more towards prevention and early intervention. Efforts need to be increasingly targeted towards preventing relationship violence escalating wherever possible with a view to bringing about a cultural change in attitudes to violence in the longer term.

1.2 Terms and Definitions

- 1.2.1 Since 2013, the non-statutory cross governmental definition of domestic violence and abuse has been:

‘Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional.



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Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation, and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.¹

- 1.2.2 In evidence² it was explained to members that, within the context of safeguarding and protection of vulnerable groups, prevention is a term used broadly to describe activities to prevent or reduce harm. It is, however, useful to distinguish between primary and secondary prevention.
- 1.2.3 **Primary prevention** means preventing violence before it happens. This involves education to change attitudes and perceptions to reduce the incidence of a problem amongst a population before it occurs. These can be targeted either universally at broad population groups, such as school-age children, or towards members or an identified group or community. Primary prevention can be divided into formal and informal educational programmes with schools and young people and community education.
- 1.2.4 Numerous examples of schools based educational programmes in Birmingham were referred to in evidence. These are aimed at raising awareness of domestic violence and engaging young people in considering healthy relationships. Examples included the Positive Relationships Programme with secondary school children delivered by Women's Aid, a variety of drama productions by theatre companies such as Loudmouth, Geese and Women in Theatre, programmes for young people funded through the Ending Gang and Youth Violence Programme and a programme to address issues of young women in gangs which provided a DVD and theatre performances of 'SHE' for secondary schools which was a collaborative effort by Women's Aid and Birmingham City University.
- 1.2.5 **Evaluating the effectiveness** of public awareness, community and other educational activities is problematic. Members were told that whilst broadly targeted campaigns that harness media attention do have the capacity to increase public awareness and knowledge, evidence of the link between such attitudinal change and behavioural change is not well established. Local campaigns have proven difficult to evaluate effectively. Reporting levels are often used as an indicator of impact but have provided a range of inconsistent results. There is however anecdotal evidence

¹ HM Government (2013) *Definition of domestic violence and abuse: guide for local areas*

² Report from Paula Harding, Senior Service Manager, Equalities, Community Safety and Social Cohesion



that victims frequently tell services that they have noticed the campaigns, often storing the help numbers and using them at some time in the future when they are ready to seek help.

1.2.6 **In terms of community education**, Members were told that Birmingham has been running annual domestic violence awareness campaigns for the last decade through the Birmingham Community Safety Partnership, through the Violence Against Women Group, through local quadrant based domestic violence fora and through individual organisations. These have been aimed variously at:

- Victims: providing positive messages about the help that is available;
- Perpetrators: conveying deterrence based messages and often aligned to sporting fixtures and targeting pubs and alcohol sales with the threat of criminal and civil justice for abusers;
- Family and Friends: providing guidance on what to do and how to seek help;
- The LGBT community: through Pink Shield aimed at encouraging reporting to the police in 2010 and an LGBT community awareness campaign in 2014 in advance of the provision of a dedicated LGBT independent domestic violence advisor which commenced in December 2014;
- Workers: raising awareness of the challenges that victims and children face through charity events and collections for refuges and through exhibitions showcasing women and children's voices through artwork;
- Young People: Ashram's work with young people in refuges to create a fund-raising single.

1.2.7 **Secondary prevention** refers to what happens to minimise the risks and to prevent the harm or the escalation of harm, once the existence of domestic violence is known about. This involves the early identification and provision of resources, help and support to those who are already experiencing harm or are particularly likely to experience harm, with the aim of decreasing the incidence and longevity of the harm caused in each case.

1.2.8 Everyone has a role to play in the prevention of often deep-rooted cross-cultural norms and practices, particularly in respect of violence against women. This is expressly not just about the activity of statutory agencies. This is about how we can improve engagement with and build community confidence so that the statutory agencies can work in concert with community partners in seeking to prevent relationship violence before it occurs.

1.3 Scale of the domestic violence and abuse challenge

1.3.1 It is clear from the evidence that there is a significant problem with domestic violence and abuse in Birmingham. The Birmingham Community Safety Partnership Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment (2013) ("the Needs Assessment") estimated that there were just over 25,000



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women aged 16-59 who have experienced some form of domestic violence and abuse in the preceding 12 months.³

- 1.3.2 The scale of the challenge needs to be set in the context of the plethora of other work that is already underway in responding to the challenge. This includes the development of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), the 'Think Family' initiative, the Le Grand Review, the Warner Report and the learning which is starting to emerge from the Domestic Homicide Reviews (see section 5). In particular, the ongoing work across the region by the West Midlands-wide multi-agency domestic violence group which is chaired by the Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People (PVVP) Strategic Lead, Stephen Rimmer and the PVVP Board who are overseeing the implementation of their Delivery Plan. The challenge also needs to be set in the context of the climate of continuing austerity which makes it even more imperative than ever to have a co-ordinated approach for the city as a whole and to ensure that more integrated working with partners becomes the norm.

1.4 Lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or trans (LGBT) domestic violence

- 1.4.1 The Needs Assessment conservatively estimated the numbers of gay and bisexual men aged 16-64 experiencing domestic violence in Birmingham each year to be 1,530 men. The proportion of gay and bisexual men subjected to repeated or ongoing domestic violence is considered to be significantly higher than for the general male population. Members recognised that domestic violence is also an issue for lesbian and bisexual women but no statistics were available in relation to Birmingham.
- 1.4.2 The Needs Assessment also identified gaps in the City's response to violence and abuse within LGBT relationships which were a cause for concern. In the light of this the Community Safety Partnership subsequently commissioned the LGBT Centre to undertake a feasibility study outlining the needs of LGBT victims of domestic abuse and potential responses. In addition the Centre undertook some workforce development and public awareness to begin to address the gaps.
- 1.4.3 The City has long recognised the role of gender inequality in the heightened risk of violence that women and girls face and the consequent need to have women only services. The study carried out by the LGBT Centre looked at the feasibility of developing specialist domestic violence services for LGBT people in Birmingham. The research found broad agreement that there was a need for a specialist LGBT domestic violence adviser and a need for an improvement in mainstream services to enable them to offer a more appropriate response to LGBT victims and survivors.

³ Source: Public Health: Estimated prevalence of domestic violence and abuse by age in Birmingham



- 1.4.4 The recent commissioning of a new specialist LGBT domestic violence service with effect from 1st December 2014 follows this model of identity specific services.

1.5 Relationship violence and men

- 1.5.1 Whilst recognising that women and girls face a heightened risk of violence and as a consequence need to have women only services, it also needs to be acknowledged that men and boys also experience relationship violence and abuse in heterosexual relationships and within a family setting.
- 1.5.2 Whilst the prevalence of domestic violence is significantly greater for females than males, the Needs Assessment estimated the victimisation of men through domestic violence to be within the range of 1,870 and 3,570 male victims each year.
- 1.5.3 The experiences of heterosexual male victims and the nature of the services that they need varies from those needed by female victims. The recent commissioning of a new specialist domestic violence service for men with effect from 1st December 2014, provides welcome recognition of this fact and of the need for identity specific services for men.

1.6 Domestic violence in black and minority ethnic communities

There is no evidence to suggest that black, minority ethnic or refugee (BAMER) women are more likely to be subjected to domestic violence than other female population groups. Indeed, the types of abuse – physical, sexual, financial, psychological, emotional and controlling behaviour mirror those experienced by women in the wider population. The results of the British Crime Survey (2010) reveals little variation between ‘white’ and ‘non-white’ victim’s experience of violence.⁴

- 1.6.1 Birmingham has a large BME population with one in three residents being from an ethnic minority. As summarised by the above quotation from the Needs Assessment, prevalence rates for domestic violence are not known to be significantly higher in any ethnic group. However there are some aspects such as language, culture and family structure which can and do have a bearing on how women and children cope with the abuse as well as having an impact on the help and support open to them which mean that black and ethnic minority women may face particular barriers to seeking help.

⁴ BCSP Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment 2013



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- 1.6.2 Although BME victims of domestic violence can access all of the domestic violence refuges in the City, as all domestic violence services will be striving hard to be culturally sensitive to meet the needs of all, it is nonetheless important that BME victims have a choice of whether to access identity specific services or not. For some women, generalist domestic violence refuges and services may provide the vital anonymity that they require, for others, they may feel that their safety is better realised with those that they share a common heritage or culture. Two agencies provide identity specific refuge in the City: Trident Reach in partnership with the National Zakat Foundation and Roshni.
- 1.6.3 In spite of the fact that prevalence rates for domestic abuse are not known to be significantly higher in any ethnic group, some aspects of gendered violence such as forced marriage, honour based violence and female genital mutilation can compound experiences of abuse for women in certain communities.
- 1.6.4 Forced marriage is defined as:
- A marriage where one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can involve physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In the case of some vulnerable adults who lack capacity to consent, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.⁵
- 1.6.5 The point was made in evidence to the Committee that there is no systematic campaign or awareness raising work in the city around attitudes of young Asian people or other BME groups to honour based violence or children missing from education who may be subjected to forced marriage. Members were also told that there is an absolute link between forced marriage and domestic violence and that this should be seen ostensibly, but not exclusively, within the wider continuum of violence against women, and between forced marriage and intergenerational violence which may happen to coerce people to marry or to continue in a forced marriage. Work is underway through the Safeguarding Adult Board on dealing with intergenerational violence.
- 1.6.6 Forced marriage is often closely linked to honour based violence or honour crime. This is described by the government to encompass:
- A variety of crimes of violence (mainly but not exclusively against women) including assault, imprisonment and murder where the person is being punished by their family or their community. They are being punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining what the family or community believes is the correct code of behaviour.⁶
- 1.6.7 The 2013/14 Roshni Annual Report contains some useful statistics which they have gathered about the women they support. The data collated by Roshni gives a snapshot of the support provided by

⁵ HM Government (2013) The Right to Choose: Multi Agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage

⁶ HM Government (2014) The Right to Choose: Multi Agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage



them to the women they help. The total number of residents admitted during the year was 33, with 8 still residing from the previous year which gives a total of 41. The main reason for referral was physical violence with the next most numerous reason being forced marriage. The majority of the women are of Pakistani ethnic origin (28) with the vast majority being aged under 35 (23 aged 16-25 and 15 aged 26-35). 21 children were also admitted during the year with almost all of them being aged under 4 (19). The majority of the referrals either come from other refuges (11), Women's Aid (8) or from the police (10).⁷

1.7 Female genital mutilation

- 1.7.1 Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a collective term for procedures which include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs, or injury to the female genital organs, for cultural or other non-medical reasons. It is also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting'.
- 1.7.2 The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time the mutilation is carried out and in later life. Beyond the immediate risk of haemorrhage and infection from the procedure, women who have undergone some forms of FGM are twice as likely to die in childbirth as those who have not, and four times more likely to give birth to a still born child. FGM is not a requirement of any religion but is a cultural practice based on custom and tradition.
- 1.7.3 At the time of writing, the Police and Crime Panel were in the process of producing a report on FGM with recommendations for the Police and Crime Commissioner and other partner organisations. In the interests of avoiding duplication, although FGM does fall within the definition of relationship violence, this Inquiry did not take detailed evidence on FGM but the members are keen to hear the findings and follow up on the implementation of the recommendations from the work of the Police and Crime Panel and to consider what future work the Committee may wish to undertake.

1.8 Young people and relationship violence

- 1.8.1 Domestic violence is often conceptualised as an 'adult' issue, something that happens between adults who are in, or have been in, an intimate relationship and research has tended to focus more on these relationships. In actual fact, adolescents experience similar levels of domestic violence as adults. It is also clear that domestic violence is still somewhat of a 'hidden' issue in our society; however, it is even more so for teenagers. This is exacerbated by the fact that adolescents are more acceptant of, and dismissive about, this form of behaviour than their adult counterparts⁸.

⁷ 2013/2014 Roshni Annual Report

⁸ Safer Southwark Partnership (2006)



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1.8.2 The Government's 'Positive for Youth' strategy and analysis of the 'This is Abuse'⁹ campaign indicated a normalisation and acceptability of abuse amongst young people and an alarming lack of understanding about sexual consent.

Some young people, particularly the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, need additional help to develop the personal and social skills and qualities they need to participate and attain in learning, avoid negative and risky behaviours, and be ready for adult life and work. Some also need early help to address specific issues and prevent them causing harm.¹⁰

1.8.3 Seeking to underpin its commitment to address teenage relationship abuse, the Government changed the definition of domestic violence to include 16 and 17 year olds and coercive behaviour in March 2013 and it is hoped that this change will help to raise awareness of teen abuse amongst practitioners and police, and prevent young people from falling through the gap between child protection and domestic abuse services.

1.8.4 Abusive behaviour in relationships between young people can take the form of physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse. It can involve control of who or where a young person is 'allowed' to see or go, or communicate with social networking pages or mobile phone. Such control leads to isolation from peer group and trusted friends in whom a young person might confide. Coercion may be used to force sexual activity. Young people may also be coerced into sending inappropriate images or 'sexting' via social media.

Sexting is "the exchange of sexual messages and images, creating, sharing and forwarding sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude images through mobile phones and on the internet" (NSPCC)¹¹

⁹ This is Abuse Campaign, <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/ending-violence-against-women-and-girls-in-the-uk/supporting-pages/this-is-abuse-campaign>

¹⁰ Positive for Youth, 2013 progress report, <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/positive-for-youth>

¹¹ <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/sexting/>



2 Engaging with communities

2.1 A community-led approach to prevention

Even if all statutory public services right across the West Midlands were beacons of excellent practice, the risk, threat and harm inside communities of particularly personal, intimate crimes is such that the voice of the victim can still easily be suppressed. Direct engagement with real communities in surfacing and discussing these difficult issues is a core part of my and many other public servants' job. It is not enough to leave this to political leaders alone; and as the Jay report so powerfully emphasised, we cannot rely on traditional forms of dialogue with "community leaders", some of whom may be ignorant or even hostile to the voices of some of those actually at risk within their communities.¹²

- 2.1.1 Any response to the challenge posed by domestic violence and abuse cannot be effective on its own. In order to address this seriously, the local authority and other partners involved such as the police and the NHS need to work directly with organisations with strong roots in and who are already engaging with their local community in bringing about cultural change and in providing an effective community coordinated response to support victims and their families.
- 2.1.2 As indicated in the quotation at the start of this section, for the community-led approach to tackling relationship violence outlined in recommendation 1 to be effective, we cannot rely on traditional forms of dialogue with "community leaders". In particular, stronger links need to be forged with a wide range of religious establishments with strong roots in local communities where issues of relationship abuse often surface. For this approach to succeed the local authority need to ensure that an up to date record of contact details and links to community and faith based groups is maintained and updated on a regular basis, annually as a minimum, which can be used to facilitate dialogue with a wider range of community leaders and community groups than has happened previously.

2.2 Mobilising communities

- 2.2.1 In this context, the importance of working with and mobilising communities through community champions as a good model for social change was referred to repeatedly by a number of witnesses, especially in relation to trying to bring some very personal and intimate crimes such as female genital mutilation, forced marriage and honour violence to the surface. The Committee

¹² Annual Report by PVVP Strategic leader, Page 11



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heard that empowering individuals in newly arrived communities to deliver the services they need is key to instigating change.

2.2.2 Representatives of affected communities told the Committee that language, cultural and social barriers often mean that these communities find it hard to approach people from outside their communities because they won't necessarily know who to go to and more often than not find it easier to raise issues with members of their own communities in the first instance. As is very often the case victims of violence and crime find it very difficult to come forward and so seeking help as a first point of call is often difficult. Community organisations told us that in the main such individuals are more likely to engage with community based agencies. Therefore it made sense to ensure that newly arrived communities and individuals within these communities are given the appropriate support to deliver appropriate services to affected individuals to instigate a step change and tackle deep-seated issues such as FGM, forced marriage and honour-based violence.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R01	<p>That the City Council encourages community-led preventative approaches within its own services and amongst its partner organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) involving working closely with community and voluntary organisations and faith groups; b) utilising and updating the most recent contact information about community champions and community leaders; c) mobilising communities and encouraging them to tackle attitudes to relationship violence with a view to preventing relationship violence and bringing about cultural change in the longer term. 	<p>Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing</p>	November 2015



3 Place Leadership role for local authority

3.1 Collaborative approach

- 3.1.1 Any response to the challenge presented by the widespread social issue of relationship violence needs to include both statutory partners and the voluntary and community sector to have any serious chance of bringing about improvements in the lives of those affected. Achieving improved outcomes will necessitate a new and collaborative approach to leadership from the statutory sector and a willingness to engage openly with and share knowledge and expertise with leaders in the voluntary and community sector. There can be no doubt that there has already been a lot of activity in this area but more genuine integrated working is needed.
- 3.1.2 The Cabinet Member in his evidence to the Inquiry acknowledged that there is potentially a “leadership” role here for the local authority in helping to bring about an environment where more integrated working can happen more easily and in providing the basis for ensuring a more coherent approach for the city as a whole and that all parties involved are working to an agreed, coherent plan. This is all the more essential in the current climate of continuing austerity.

3.2 Refreshed strategy

- 3.2.1 Members were told by the Cabinet Member that during 2015 the intention is to revise Birmingham’s first integrated Violence Against Women Strategy 2013-15 (“The Strategy”), which is coming to the end of its three year term, with a view to addressing areas where we know improvements can be made. This work will be headed up by Cllr Jess Phillips, Chair of the Birmingham Community Safety Partnership’s Violence Against Women and Children Steering Group and the City Council’s Victims’ Champion. The strategy sets out the priorities for the Birmingham Violence Against Women Board which brings together the key agencies to lead the City’s response to violence against women. A refreshed strategy seems like a good place to start in terms of providing a coherent plan for the City and a collaborative approach to the challenges of working together to tackle relationship violence in the City.
- 3.2.2 The existing strategy is broken down into six strands, each of which has a narrative and an action plan with key performance indicators relevant to that strand. The six strands are as follows:
- Domestic violence;
 - Sexual violence;
 - Violence in young people’s relationships;
 - Forced marriage and honour based violence;
 - Female genital mutilation;



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- Women exploited through prostitution and trafficking.

3.2.3 However, as highlighted by Stephen Rimmer in his evidence to the Inquiry and in his PVVP Annual Report, there is little point in having a strategy if it is not implemented and there is often a gap between strategic intent and operational delivery. In order to implement the Strategy, it will be necessary to make strenuous efforts to ensure that, as far as is possible, all schools, including academies, are on board with the revised Strategy. Getting Birmingham schools on board with the Strategy will be vital to the implementation when it comes to working with other partners on delivering the educational programmes and awareness campaigns referred to in section 4.1 of this report.

3.2.4 The refreshed Strategy also needs to be linked to an operating model which works across the City and needs to be informed by an evidence base about the types of interventions that actually work. It also needs to be aligned to the Think Families agenda and to be embedded across all agencies in order for the strategy to be implemented successfully.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R02	<p>That the City Council strengthens its leadership role for the city by reviewing the domestic violence strategy and enabling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) coherent pathways for victims and children, across sectors, to access the support and protection they need; b) strengthening the engagement of schools and other educational establishments, including academies, committing to participating; c) integrated working between Birmingham Youth Services and Think Family Team and Children's Services and homelessness; d) youth service providers from both statutory and third sector involvement in the delivery of informal education programmes with young people. 	<p>Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing</p>	November 2015



4 Prevention through education

4.1 Educational programmes in schools

Prevention activity is difficult to measure, or even assess. But it is self-evidently better than “cure” (or more accurately, responding to something bad happening) and has therefore been at the heart of the PVVP work¹³

- 4.1.1 Primary prevention in Birmingham has taken the shape of educational programmes and awareness campaigns, aimed variously at victims, perpetrators, parents and young people as referred to in paragraph 1.2.6. School based programmes aimed at raising awareness of relationship violence and engaging young people in considering healthy relationships such as the Birmingham and Solihull Women’s Aid schools programme, which promotes a whole school ethos, have been a feature of the Birmingham landscape for many years, but have lacked universal or even wide coverage. Any work on healthy relationships needs to look at alternative families and relationships that are not only heterosexual by utilising resources such as CHIPS (Challenging Homophobia in Primary Schools) which provides a set of books for use in the language and literacy framework with accompanying lesson plans for reception through to year 6, which engage young people in exploring different family models.
- 4.1.2 Schools should be key in educating children and young people that violence is wrong and examples of educational programmes delivered in Birmingham schools over a number of years were given in evidence, previously referred to in paragraph 1.2.4.

Schools are our single most important civic institution in supporting those at risk of vulnerability to violence, and in setting clear boundaries for reinforcing acceptable and challenging unacceptable behaviour¹⁴

- 4.1.3 Members were told that the anecdotal evidence from schools was that their awareness of domestic violence and abuse is on the increase and hugely under-reported and that more collaborative working amongst agencies in schools would help to begin to tackle the underlying causes by educating children and thereby starting to bring about a change in culture and attitudes. At the moment preventative work can only be done where agencies are allowed into or invited into schools. This means that the work only reaches a tiny fraction of schools in the city and is of necessity piecemeal and cannot be targeted. Members were repeatedly told by a wide range of witnesses that it can be difficult for external agencies to gain access to schools and that some schools just do not want these issues discussed. For these reasons, the view was repeatedly

¹³ Annual Report by PVVP Strategic Leader, Page 10

¹⁴ Annual Report by PVVP Strategic Leader, Page 10



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expressed to members by a range of witnesses that greater efforts need to be made to encourage and persuade as many schools and educational establishments as possible, including academies, to take part in this preventative work.

- 4.1.4 In terms of delivering this primary preventative work, there are a variety of organisations who are willing and able to assist schools in delivering this important message. The West Midlands Police referred to some examples where they are already working with some schools around preventing violence. For example, in “Operation Green Shield” the police work with schools to organise supervision outside schools between 3-5 pm, which has been identified as the target time to intervene to prevent incidents. Members were also told about “The Lionheart Challenge” where the police are engaging with schools to communicate the clear message that violence is wrong. Much more collaborative work could and should be done where external organisations can work with schools to help educate young people about violence. The youth service, the police, third sector agencies and in particular a range of smaller community and religious organisations who have the detailed knowledge, experience and understanding of their local community, need to be facilitated to have access to schools to be able to collaborate with schools to reinforce the message that violence is always wrong.
- 4.1.5 Members were also told that, apart from the Miss Dorothy Programme which is for primary schools and has a wide reach, many of the school based programmes aimed at raising awareness of relationship violence and healthy relationships are currently targeted at year 11 pupils which in many cases is too late. In order to bring about the cultural change in attitudes to violence needed by educating young people that violence is wrong, this awareness raising needs to be done at an earlier stage and ideally in primary schools.
- 4.1.6 The importance of educational interventions designed to tackle domestic violence and promote healthy relationships appears indisputable. However, if interventions are going to be delivered in schools, they must be effective and any delivery with young people must be undertaken by those with a clear understanding and awareness of the issues involved.
- 4.1.7 The other important aspect which was also mentioned in evidence was about the benefits of taking a whole school approach to positive relationships. This would mean that as well as running sessions, ensuring that all staff in schools have a basic understanding of domestic violence, know how to respond and create safe places for disclosure by children and young people and that opportunities to focus on positive relationships are built into the curriculum as well as working with link workers in schools to deliver programmes to educate parents as well as children. It is clearly counterproductive if children are listening to one message about violence in school but are receiving a different, conflicting message at home. The possibility of approaching this issue via the Governors Network was mentioned. At the moment schools are lacking specific guidance on how to respond to domestic violence and the provision of guidance for schools would assist them to respond effectively.



4.2 Informal education

- 4.2.1 In addition to school based programmes, Members heard about the important preventative work which happens outside of school through youth work delivery supporting children and young people in building positive relationships, building resilience and providing young people with coping strategies which are crucial in tackling this agenda.
- 4.2.2 Birmingham's Youth Service offer a range of targeted programmes that help young people understand what is a 'healthy relationship'. By developing an understanding of what constitutes a healthy relationship, this work enables discussion about 'unhealthy relationships' in a non-threatening and informal environment. Examples of these programmes include:
- SHE – Sexual Health Education programme;
 - CSE Project run in partnership with Cherished and WM Police;
 - YouTube video project looking at violence in relationships; and
 - DV workshops in partnership with Barnardos.
- 4.2.3 These youth work programmes are particularly important for those young people who do not readily engage within the school environment. Youth workers seek to raise young people's awareness regarding healthy relationships whether with friends, parents, partners or in the wider community through a variety of methods that:
- Address the domestic violence and abuse issues faced by young people;
 - Highlight issues of importance around relationships, violence and abuse;
 - Challenge attitudes and stimulate discussion.
- 4.2.4 With a primary aim of preventing domestic violence and abuse from taking place in young people's current and future relationships by:
- Promoting self-esteem;
 - Raising awareness of domestic violence and abuse in a safe environment;
 - Exploring myths and stereotypes about gender and behaviour;
 - Empowering young people to recognise safe and unsafe situations; and
 - Exploring rights and responsibilities associated with relationships.
- 4.2.5 A focus was put on the importance of youth work for building young people's resilience by providing the skills and attitude to cope with challenging situations as well as ensuring a sense of self-worth and belonging. If young people have this then they are better able to recognise and remove themselves from violent relationships.



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Examples of programmes focused on violence delivered by Birmingham Youth Service

Oaklands Young People's Centre – Two 8 week programmes looking at positive relationships. The first was aimed at young women and was called "Girls Rock" and the second was a mixed group and called "1 Step4ward". The programmes were run in partnership with the Family Support Team and covered the following:

- Domestic Violence and what help young people can get either as someone living in a household where DV is present or being in a relationship and experiencing it.
- Building young people's confidence and self-worth to help them feel positive about themselves and believe that they deserve the best.
- Looking at what constitutes a healthy relationship.
- Sexual health.
- Building young people's resilience to enable them to identify the signs of an abusive relationship and know what to do.

Another programme is currently being planned in partnership with the Real Project (supports the sexual health of Birmingham's African Caribbean communities by providing information, advice and sexual health resources in community based settings) looking at sexual bullying.

The Lighthouse – Delivered a residential course in partnership with Women's Aid and the Police, around the CSE agenda, and focussing on the sexual violence that young women experience as a result of gang affiliations. This has led to the young women being part of a mentoring programme run by Cherished in partnership with Birmingham Youth Service. This programme (residential and mentoring) was called "Girls Empowerment". In addition to this The Lighthouse are planning the same programme but working with young men. This is being run in partnership with the Real Project and the working title is "Boys Space". The intention is to work with young men looking at what constitutes a healthy and positive relationship and what constitutes an unhealthy relationship and the consequences of that. The programme will be based around an agenda of respect. The Lighthouse are also running the first Child Sexual Exploitation regional conference aimed at young people. This took place in March and brought young people together from 7 regions to raise awareness around CSE.

Concord Youth Centre – Currently reproducing a negative YouTube video and deconstructing it with young people so it becomes positive and less verbally violent and disrespectful towards the woman. Young people have found in their research that some music videos promote both verbal aggression and low level violence towards young women in relationships, resulting in unacceptable behaviour within relationships. This programme has recently come to an end and lasted 6 sessions with the culmination of a celebration event at The MAC that showcased the work that was done alongside 5 other youth centres around youth violence. This was funded by Birmingham Youth Violence Steering Group as part of Youth Violence programme.



	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R03	<p>That the City Council and its partners encourage schools and educational establishments to take a 'whole school approach' to children and young people developing positive relationships and provide guidance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) the delivery of school based educational programmes and awareness campaigns aimed at educating young people about healthy relationships in both primary and secondary settings drawing on the expertise of the specialist domestic violence sector;b) working in partnership with youth service providers and in facilitating informal education delivery that promotes healthy relationships and brings about a change in attitudes to relationship violence; andc) working with parents to educate parents about attitudes to relationship violence.	<p>Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services</p>	<p>November 2015</p>



5 Prevention: learning lessons from domestic homicide reviews

5.1 Purpose of domestic homicide reviews

- 5.1.1 The legislation which put domestic homicide reviews on a statutory basis requires that a domestic homicide review be undertaken in circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person with whom they had been in an intimate relationship or with whom they had shared a household. Reviews are therefore undertaken in circumstances of domestic violence and abuse as well as cases of intergenerational and adult, familial violence.
- 5.1.2 Prevention of future violence and abuse homicides is one of the purposes of carrying out domestic homicide reviews. The aim is to do this by:
- Establishing what lessons are to be learned from a homicide regarding the way in which local professionals and organisations work individually and together to safeguard victims.
 - Identifying and enacting improved service responses within and between agencies. The reviews do not seek to determine who was to blame for the death as these are matters for the coroner's and criminal courts to decide. Neither are they part of any disciplinary process. Instead, they serve to provide a framework for reflection and learning with a view to future harm prevention.
- 5.1.3 The reviews are also intended to improve public confidence in services. In order to do this, the reviews need to be guided by principles of independence, openness, fairness and transparency and need to be seen as an effective vehicle for change.

5.2 Domestic homicide reviews in Birmingham

- 5.2.1 The chair of the Community Safety Partnership has the statutory responsibility for establishing whether a homicide is to be the subject of a domestic homicide review. In Birmingham this decision-making is supported by a Domestic Homicide Review Steering Group, whose membership is made up of each of the authorities required under statute to participate in the reviews.
- 5.2.2 It is a requirement that each review be chaired by an independent person and supported by a panel of professionals, each of whom must be independent of the case in question. In order to support the independence of the process further, panel membership in Birmingham always includes Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid where the case is one of domestic violence and abuse, and Birmingham MIND where the case is one of inter-generational violence connected with mental ill-health.



5.2.3 Due to its size Birmingham Community Safety Partnership is conducting significantly more domestic homicide reviews than any other single area in England and Wales, although the number of deaths pro rata is comparable with other metropolitan areas. Since April 2011, there have been twenty deaths initially considered to be domestic homicides. Of the twenty, the coroner concluded in one case that the death occurred through natural causes without suspicious circumstances so a domestic homicide review was not required. At the time of writing, progress with the remaining 19 was as follows:

- Five reviews have been published;
- One is concluded but subject to risk assessment before publication;
- Three will shortly be submitted to the Home Office;
- Eight are in full progress and;
- Two are in the early stages of being undertaken.

5.3 Emerging learning and themes

5.3.1 Initial analysis of the data¹⁵ gathered from the 19 cases to date, in terms of the nature of the violence shows that:

- 84% have involved domestic violence and abuse from an intimate partner.
- 16% have involved intergenerational violence where the perpetrator, or alleged perpetrator, was experiencing mental ill-health.
- Ending the relationship appears to be a factor in the majority of domestic violence cases and separation is one of the key risk factors known to correlate with a homicide.

5.3.2 Analysis of attributes of victims shows:

- 87% of victims are female.
- 37% of victims are from black and minority ethnic communities.
- Children have been bereaved through the loss of a parent (mother) in 58% of cases and a baby has been killed in one case alongside his mother.
- The age of adult victims range from 22 to 72 with an average age of 42.

5.3.3 In relation to perpetrators:

- 95% are male.
- 79% have known mental health problems.
- 47% have substance misuse problems

¹⁵ Report from Paula Harding, Senior Service Manager, Equalities, Community Safety and Social Cohesion



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- 42% are from black or ethnic minority communities.

5.3.4 The numbers of cases to date in Birmingham is too small to form any statistically relevant conclusions in themselves. However, Members were told that many of the issues emerging during the course of the Birmingham domestic homicide reviews are akin to concerns raised by the specialist domestic violence sector and resonate with the much larger body of research evidence available.

5.4 Patterns of abuse

5.4.1 Members were told that a number of Birmingham reviews are starting to reveal archetypal patterns of abuse:

- The threat of death or serious injury significantly increases when a victim tries to leave or end a violent relationship;
- Domestic violence involves sexual violence and coercion: continuous pregnancies from a young age should alert professionals to potential abuse;
- Domestic violence often starts or gets worse during pregnancy: a number of our reviews have revealed serious violence during pregnancy;
- Without effective intervention, domestic violence escalates;
- Domestic violence victims seek immediate help from the police but will often retract their statements;
- Domestic violence perpetrators make counter allegations and minimise the abuse;
- Perpetrators often repeat their pattern of behaviour with subsequent victims so it is all the more important to be aware of their offending history;
- Victims are judged poorly if they fail to end a violent relationship but may be struggling to keep the perpetrator away and fearful of doing so;
- Mothers are often held responsible for keeping themselves and their children safe, even when they are unable to do so.

5.5 Importance of early help and intervention

5.5.1 Evidence of the nature of domestic violence highlights that when left unchecked and without intervention, the scale and severity of the harm that abusers inflict on victims and children will normally increase. It follows that the earlier agencies engage and provide safe options for victims and children, the better. The reviews are identifying places that have not traditionally been referral points for domestic violence victims, such as primary care and hospital emergency departments, recognising that these are environments that victims frequently use and already trust. Likewise,



schools and universal children's services provide important settings for the early identification of domestic violence and abuse and are increasingly featuring in domestic homicide reviews.



6 Dealing with perpetrators

6.1 Offender management: criminal proceedings

- 6.1.1 The evidence from West Midlands Police to the Inquiry was that we are working from a position of strength in Birmingham in relation to partnership working and that significant advances are being made in managing domestic violence perpetrators and in ensuring that they are prevented from continuing to abuse victims and children. However the landscape around violence and abuse is changing and changes are taking place within the context of an ongoing national debate about the law relating to domestic abuse.
- 6.1.2 West Midlands Police have over recent years shifted more resources into public protection and this is beginning to show results. Work is ongoing to understand better what victims want from police intervention with the aspiration of building the confidence of victims sufficiently to encourage them to report early, which is of course fundamental, but this needs to go alongside a commitment to bringing perpetrators to justice through the criminal justice system.
- 6.1.3 West Midlands Police now have domestic abuse teams which safeguard and protect victims but they have recently renewed their focus on domestic abuse offender management. They are currently still in the early stages of building an offender management programme but already they are arresting and charging more offenders, have improved the rate of early guilty pleas in court and are aiming to reduce repeat offences. Early results show that to date the programme has halved the rate of cases where “no further action” is taken which is a move in the right direction.
- 6.1.4 Reference was made to the fact that 16 and 17 year olds are now recognised as victims of domestic violence but it will take some time to see whether this is reflected in police data in the future as an increase in conviction rates.
- 6.1.5 In recent years there have been significant advances in multi-agency arrangements for dealing with domestic violence. Much effort has been put into working together to manage victims known to be at high risk through multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC). The evidence given referred to some of the ongoing challenges that exist around the MARAC which include funding, a need to increase the proportion of referrals from partner agencies other than the police and the fact that third parties also need to be encouraged to report domestic abuse to the police.

6.2 Offender management: civil proceedings

- 6.2.1 In addition to the possibility of taking criminal proceedings against perpetrators, victims of domestic violence may seek civil protection from their abusers. In Birmingham, the West Midlands Police have recently worked successfully with Birmingham City Council Legal Services to take civil proceedings using the powers of the local authority to obtain civil injunctions against a number of



suspected perpetrators. This innovative approach is to be commended and encouraged as an alternative way of securing justice and protecting potentially vulnerable victims, even where victims may not be willing or able to pursue the criminal route.

- 6.2.2 Mental health issues present a major contributory factor in a large proportion of violent offences and there is ongoing thinking about interventions and how best to collectively manage the risks associated with violence and mental health. Work is already underway, under the auspices of the PVVP strategic lead, in developing a new Partnership Forum which will explicitly focus on bringing some collective focus to bear on managing these risks.



7 Commissioning

7.1 Integrated approach to commissioning: good practice

- 7.1.1 The commissioning process needs to ensure that the best possible service is provided for victims, regardless of who delivers the service. The new community mental health service for Birmingham's children and young adults aged up to 25 which is proposed to start in October 2015 was cited in evidence as a good example of the type of integrated approach to commissioning which incorporates innovative new thinking and solutions. Birmingham Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is working in partnership with Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust, Priory Health Care, Beacon UK and The Children's Society to deliver the proposed new community health service which will aim to identify mental health issues as early as possible so children and young people get the right treatment before the problems become more serious.
- 7.1.2 The new service will also address the transition problems which young people aged 16-18 frequently experience when moving from children's to adults' services by extending the service to the age of 25 years. There will be a focus on sharing information between staff and where possible mental health services will be delivered locally and co-located with existing services in places such as children's centres and GP surgeries. There will be a number of ways to access services including online, app-based and/or face-to-face, depending on need. There will also be one single telephone number for patients and their families, available 24 hours a day.

7.2 Commissioning process and the third sector

- 7.2.1 Currently the City Council operates a gateway process for referrals of domestic violence. For instance if Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid as a recipient of Supporting People (SP) monies receive a call from a woman suffering domestic violence they need to refer that woman to the gateway so that a support worker can be assigned. The City Council is instrumental in allocating a support worker to that woman from any of the organisations that it currently funds through SP. Members heard that this can present a barrier to some women seeking help and support especially those accessing community based services as they would not necessarily know who they would be receiving that support from and whether the support would be appropriate to their needs, for example if there are any particular language or cultural barriers. This also puts victims off as they may be expecting support from the organisation that they have specifically made the initial contact with because they know of it or it is based in their community for instance. In order to address this challenge and to ensure that victims and professionals have access to help and advice on the full range of services available to them, beyond merely those funded by Supporting People, Birmingham Community Safety Partnership has commissioned a separate domestic violence



helpline which will be working in partnership with Gateway, The helpline is provided by Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid.

- 7.2.2 In the course of the evidence gathering for this Inquiry members heard from some third sector organisations about the impact of the revised commissioning process on them. However at the time of writing this report the Partnership, Contract Performance and Third Sector Overview and Scrutiny Committee were also drafting their Inquiry report into Council Commissioning with Third Sector organisations. For this reason, it would not be appropriate for this Inquiry to duplicate work by making recommendations about the commissioning process and detailed evidence was not heard by the Members. However, the Committee will be interested to hear about the findings and recommendations within that report and in particular about the support that smaller and specialist third sector organisations might require in the future in accessing commissioning and contracting opportunities and being part of the discussions when new proposals are out for consultation. There was also concern that when the City Council commissions services that it pays attention to the needs of all communities especially those providing specialist services to the most vulnerable in our communities and where there are specific needs.



8 Conclusions

8.1 Leadership

- 8.1.1 Relationship violence is a term which can be used to describe a wide range of crimes including domestic violence and abuse and including forced marriage, honour based violence and female genital mutilation. Each of these constitute specialised topics in themselves and as such they would each merit a separate Inquiry. For the purposes of this report, due to the time constraints to complete the work, they have of necessity been largely outside the scope of this Inquiry.
- 8.1.2 The scale of the challenge presented by the prevalence and impact of domestic violence and abuse in Birmingham is clearly significant, as evidenced by the considerable volume of data collated and analysed in the Needs Assessment. Quite apart from the impact of the physical and emotional consequences of domestic violence suffered by individual victims and families, according to the figures in the Needs Assessment, domestic violence is estimated to cost the City's public services £114 million. When combined with the estimated human and emotional costs, this figure increases to £310 million.¹⁶ Although more commonly inflicted on women by men, it is clear that both men and women may experience domestic violence or abuse and that it can happen across a range of relationships including heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- 8.1.3 Although there is evidence of a high degree of commitment to tackling domestic violence on the part of a range of organisations across the City, more needs to be done to ensure that resources are used as efficiently as possible and to promote access to services. The imminent revision of the Birmingham's Violence against Women Strategy 2013-15 provides an opportunity for the local authority to demonstrate a new and more collaborative approach to leadership and a renewed willingness to work collaboratively with the police, the NHS and in particular to strengthen engagement with organisations in the voluntary and community sector and with faith based groups who already have strong roots in their local communities and where issues of relationship abuse often surface.
- 8.1.4 Shifting efforts more towards prevention and early intervention is fundamental to successfully tackling relationship violence and prevention through education is key. Members were told that awareness of domestic violence and abuse in schools is increasing. Schools based programmes aimed at raising awareness of relationship violence and engaging young people in considering what constitutes a healthy relationship are central to this but there are a wide variety of other organisations who are willing and able to assist schools further in delivering this important message. This process needs to be encouraged and facilitated. Greater efforts need to be made to encourage and persuade as many schools and educational establishments as possible to

¹⁶ BCSP Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment 2013



participate in preventative work. In addition to school based programmes, informal education which happens outside of school in supporting children and young people to build positive relationships and resilience through youth work delivery is important in tackling this agenda and schools need to work in partnership with youth service providers in facilitating this to happen.

- 8.1.5 The local authority needs to take up the challenge of fulfilling a 'leadership role' in order to provide a more coherent approach for the whole City, to bring about an environment where more integrated working can happen more easily and to facilitate the necessary shift to a more preventative approach to alleviating the suffering of so many victims of relationship violence in the City.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R04	That an assessment of progress against the recommendations made in this report be presented to the relevant O&S Committee	Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety	November 2015



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Appendix A: Witnesses

The Committee would like to thank the following for their time and contribution to this Inquiry:

Chief Inspector Sean Russell	West Midlands Police
Councillor James McKay	Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety
Councillor Jess Phillips	Chair of the Birmingham Community Safety Partnership Violence Against Women and Children Steering Group
Detective Chief Inspector Ian Green	West Midlands Police
Detective Chief Inspector Kim Madill	West Midlands Police
Fadel Takroui	British Arab Foundation
Gill Taylor and Kulbinder Chohan	Roshni
Haps Bram and Inderpal Dhesi	Ashram Housing
Jacky Mulveen and Donna O'Sullivan	Allens Croft Project
Lisa Thompson	West Midlands Rape and Sexual Violence Project
Maureen Connolly	Chief Executive, Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid
Paula Harding	Senior Service Manager- Violence Against Women, Birmingham City Council
Razia Hadiat	Small Heath Community Forum
Saidah Sultana	Pure Hearts
Sarah Hewitt-Clarkson	Head Teacher, Anderton Primary School
Soulla Yiasouma	Deputy Head of Youth Service, Birmingham City Council
Steph Keeble	Chief Executive, Birmingham LGBT
Stephen Rimmer	Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People Strategic Lead