

Decision Pathway – Report Template



PURPOSE: For noting

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 09 March 2021

TITLE	Mayoral Commission on Domestic Abuse		
Ward(s)	All		
Author: Jonathan Downing	Job title: Policy Advisor, Mayor's Office		
Cabinet lead: Helen Godwin	Executive Director lead: Jacqui Jensen		
Proposal origin: Mayor			
Decision maker: Cabinet Member			
Decision forum: Cabinet			
<p>Purpose of Report: In Summer 2020, with the support of the Mayor, Cllr Asher Craig (Deputy Mayor, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Communities and Equalities) and Cllr Helen Godwin (Cabinet Member for Women, Families and Homes) co-chaired the Mayoral Commission on Domestic Abuse – a commission convening over 80 representatives from 28 local and national organisations to propose and agree principles and recommendations to underpin Bristol's response to domestic abuse and sexual violence. This report sets out the commission's conclusions and key recommendations to help improve the city's response to domestic abuse and sexual violence, and ensure Bristol is a city where everybody can feel safe and thrive.</p>			
<p>Evidence Base:</p> <p><u>The Mayoral Commission on Domestic Abuse</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The One City Plan contains the goal that by 2049, "Bristol will be a city free from domestic abuse and gender inequality." 2. The Commission convened 81 representatives from 28 local and national organisations to discuss the draft principles or the report and proposed recommendations for the city to adopt which will underpin Bristol's response to domestic abuse and sexual violence. 3. Commissioners participated in five workshops to propose recommendations for five areas: children and families, sexual abuse and violence, health and care, prevention and recovery, and housing and accommodation. 4. The Commission co-chairs were joined by the five chairs of the workshop sessions to finalise the principles and agree the final recommendations. The workshop chairs were: Ann James (Director of Children, Families and Safer Communities – Bristol City Council), Claire Bloor (CEO – Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support), Christina Gray (Director of Public Health – Bristol City Council), Sue Mountstevens (Police and Crime Commissioner – Avon and Somerset), Sue Moss (Senior Public Health Specialist, Bristol City Council) and Carol Metters (former Chief Executive, Next Link Housing) 5. This report sets out principles and recommendations that organisations across the city, from specialist services to businesses and employers, can adopt to help prevent domestic abuse and sexual violence, support those experiencing it, and help survivors to recover. <p><u>Impact of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence in Bristol</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. In 2020, 7,382 offences were flagged as involving domestic abuse in Bristol. 7. Due to the high levels of unreported cases of domestic and sexual abuse, we estimate that the numbers of people experiencing abuse in Bristol to be higher. In 2019 Bristol City Council estimated that approximately 17,000 adults in Bristol experienced domestic abuse (including over 11,000 women), and up to 6,200 could have experienced sexual assault (including approximately 4000 women). 			

- The National Domestic Abuse Helpline reported that calls and contacts in June 2020, after initial lockdown restrictions were eased, were nearly 80% higher than usual. Next Link in Bristol reported a 30% increase in referrals when the first lockdown ended.

Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

- Note the contents and recommendations of the report of the Mayoral Commission on Domestic Abuse.
- Note that reports setting out the council's response to the statutory duties placed on the local authority by the Domestic Abuse Bill will be brought to Cabinet once the Bill is in force.

Corporate Strategy alignment:

- Wellbeing** – Embed health in all our policies to improve physical & mental health and wellbeing, reducing inequalities and the demand for acute services.
- Empowering and Caring** – Prioritise community development and enable people to support their community. The commission emphasises that domestic abuse and sexual violence are everybody's business, and includes commitments to empower communities and local businesses to take steps to prevent and respond to abuse.

City Benefits:

- The report sets out practical recommendations for individuals, communities and city partners to implement which will help increase the opportunities for those experiencing abuse to disclose their situation effectively, and to ensure that Bristol is a zero tolerance city for domestic abuse and sexual violence.
- The report highlights barriers different groups face in disclosing abuse and accessing services (including disabled people, LGBTQ+ people, older residents, individuals from BAME communities, and those who do not speak English or for whom English is an additional language), and the recommendations commit the council and partners to overcome barriers and ensure victims and survivors of all backgrounds and identities can access support that is right for them.
- The report notes the estimated £14 billion cost to UK businesses from lost output related to time off work and reduced productivity, and outlines practical recommendations employers can implement to prevent domestic abuse and sexual violence and help survivors recover from their experience.

Consultation Details:

- Organisations who participated in the commission workshops included Bristol City Council, North Bristol NHS Trust, University Hospitals Bristol & Weston NHS Trust, Avon and Somerset Police, Probation Services, Next Link Housing, SARSAS (Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support), Bristol Women's Commission, Galop, Womankind, Kinergy, Beloved, Shelter, and IRISi.

Background Documents:

- [Domestic Abuse Bill 2019-21](#)
- [Re-Procurement of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Services Contracts](#)
- [The Economic and Social Costs of Domestic Abuse \(Home Office, January 2019\)](#)

Revenue Cost	£N/A	Source of Revenue Funding	N/A
Capital Cost	£N/A	Source of Capital Funding	N/A
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:

1. Finance Advice: The Domestic Abuse Bill currently before Parliament includes a new duty relating to the provision of support to victims and their children within safe accommodation, placing requirements on authorities (across England to appoint a local partnership board, prepare and publish strategies based on robust needs assessments and give effect to these strategies. Bristol City Council has been allocated £,1079,426 in funding to deliver these new and important responsibilities which will come into force in 2021.

The Mayoral Commission on Domestic Abuse has set out a number of recommendations to enable partners and communities across Bristol to tackle domestic abuse and which will need to satisfy the new duties. At this stage,

there are no specific financial implications. Any future spending proposals will therefore need to go through a new decision pathway, for sign off of any spend.

Finance Business Partner Denise Hunt 16 February 2021.

2. Legal Advice: The Domestic Abuse Bill requires local authorities to publish and implement a strategy for the provision of domestic abuse support and appoint a domestic abuse local partnership board to advise it on the strategy. The Bill also provides that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse will automatically have 'priority need' for homelessness assistance. The recommendations in this report are lawful and the report by the Mayoral Commission on Domestic Abuse (Appendix A) will assist the authority in meeting its obligations under the Domestic Abuse Bill when it becomes law.

Legal Team Leader: Sarah Sharland 8/2/2021

3. Implications on IT: No immediate concerns for IT Services, but the approach for 'information-sharing and record-keeping' improvements should be developed with advice from Information Assurance colleagues to ensure risks are mitigated and any information management or information security obligations are met.

IT Team Leader: Simon Oliver, 2 February 2021

4. HR Advice: The report as currently presented does not have any specific HR implications for Bristol City Council employees.

HR Partner: Lorna Laing, 4 February 2021

EDM Sign-off	Jacqui Jensen	3 February 2021
Cabinet Member sign-off	Cllr Helen Godwin	2 February 2021
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's Office	8 February 2021

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	YES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayoral Commission on Domestic Abuse – Report and Recommendations • Appendix: Summary of Principles and Recommendations 	
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	NO
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	NO
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	NO
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT	NO
Appendix L – Procurement	NO