

Community Equality Impact Assessment

The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have “due regard” to a variety of Equalities objectives (Equality Act 2010, Section 149) and consequently, Equality Analysis must be carried out to demonstrate that decision-makers are fully aware of the impact that changes may have on stakeholders.

The concept of ‘due regard’ was reinforced in 2012 during the review of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which “requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities”

‘Due regard’ is dependent on the relevance and potential impact of the decision being considered. The greater the relevance and impact, the higher the regard due.

As an authority, we have made a commitment to apply a systematic screening process to new policy, strategy, functions or service development including reviews or changes to existing policy, strategy, functions or services.

This is to determine whether the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on different groups within our community.

This process has been developed, together with [full guidance](#), to support officers in meeting our duties under the:

- Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- The Best Value Guidance
- The Public Service (Social Value) 2012 Act

In addition, the guidance supports officers to consider our commitments set out in the [Thurrock Joint Compact](#) with the voluntary sector.

As well as supporting you to look at whether there is, or will be, a significant impact, the guidance will also consider ways in which you might mitigate this in the future.

About the service and reason for the development or review process

Name of service	Thurrock Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2023/26
Lead Officer	Priscilla Tsang
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Why is this policy, strategy, function or service development/review needed?
The current VAWG strategy of 2020/23 is due to expire. This new strategy will reflect the legislative changes that have occurred since 2020. This strategy and subsequent action plan will highlight and address any community or equalities anomalies. These will be incorporated within the three-year action plan.

1. Consultation, data and intelligence

1.1 Please highlight the steps you have taken, or plan to take, to consult the whole community or specific groups affected by the policy, strategy, function or service development/review e.g. on-line consultation, focus groups, consultation with representative groups? For further guidance please contact: consultations@thurrock.gov.uk <i>This is a vital step</i>
<p>The national government VAWG strategy details the outcomes from the Call for evidence regarding the then proposed focus for new VAWG priorities. The call for evidence received over 180 thousand replies, the largest in history for a call for evidence. It identified themes and areas of priority to be addressed. The broad issues experienced are commonly the similar across geographical areas.</p> <p>This local domestic abuse and vawg strategy aligns with the national priorities. Locally, the VAWG strategic board has been consulted, which has statutory and voluntary professionals in attendance, changing Pathways, SERICC, Public Health, ICB, Inclusions Thurrock, and Essex Police.</p> <p>Locally, the Sexual Violence and Abuse: A Thurrock Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, included interviews with Thurrock survivors of sexual violence and abuse.</p> <p>This strategy will be shared with Thurrock Council staff groups. The women's network has identified that raising awareness of domestic abuse should be a priority for the network. This strategy addresses this priority.</p> <p>The VAWG Board wishes to further consult with specific groups through service providers when developing the action plan that will support this strategy.</p>

1.2 Please also provide details on the sources of data or intelligence you have used to inform your assessment of impact and how they have helped you to understand those that will be affected by the policy, strategy, function or service development/review outlined?

[Government VAWG strategy and call for evidence submissions](#)

[Thurrock Council Health and Wellbeing strategy](#)

[Census data 2021](#)

Safe Lives [Spotlight series- Hidden victims](#)

[Thurrock Council Needs Assessment on Domestic Abuse Victims Residing in Safe Accommodation](#)

[Domestic Abuse Commissioner report- A Patchwork of Provision'](#)

[How to meet the needs of victims and survivors across England and Wales](#)

Crime Survey for England and Wales

Galop

2. Community and workforce impact

1.1 What impacts will this policy, strategy, function or service development/review have on communities, workforce and the health and wellbeing of local residents? Look at what you know? What does your research tell you?

Consider:

- National and local data sets – please see guidance
- Complaints
- Consultation and service monitoring information
- Voluntary and community organisations
- The Equality Act places a specific duty on people with 'protected characteristics'. The table below details these groups and helps you to consider the impact on these groups.

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	What are the positive and negative impacts?	How will benefits be enhanced and negative impacts minimised or eliminated?
Local communities in general	x			Tackling hidden offences across all spectres of society. This strategy has a specific theme of 'positive communities' to include engagement and training for local communities to help	Improved engagement and awareness raising, resulting in increased identification of these crimes, empowering communities to be

				identify and tackle VAWG crimes within Thurrock.	catalyst for societal change.
Age	x			The strategy addresses victims and perpetrators both older and younger Children are now victims of domestic abuse in their own right by law as per DA Act Elder abuse is acknowledged as under reported locally and nationally	Having regard for our population breakdown will assist us in directing services appropriately. Increased understanding of the different barriers faced by people, dependent on age, allows us to offer a person centered response
Disability	x			Identified as underreported- locally and nationally A higher percentage of adults with a disability experienced domestic abuse in the last year than those without. ¹	Increase capturing of this data will enable us to see any disproportionally of individuals experiencing DA/VAWG crimes. Data helps us understand the additional barriers to reporting
Gender reassignment	x			Identified as underreported- locally and nationally	Increase capturing of this data will enable us to see any disproportionally of individuals experiencing DA/VAWG crimes
Marriage and civil partnership	x			Strategy addresses abuse within all domestic relationships	For the year ending March 2022, the Crime Survey for England and Wales showed that a significantly larger proportion of adults who were separated experienced domestic abuse in the last year than those who were married or civil partnered, cohabiting, or widowed. However, marital status may have

¹ Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2022

					changed as a result of the abuse experienced.
Pregnancy and maternity	x			Around 30% of domestic abuse begins during pregnancy, while 40–60% of women experiencing domestic abuse are abused during pregnancy. ²	Increased awareness of this issue via training to professionals and increase IDVA support across SET
Race (including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers)	x			There were no significant differences between ethnic groups experiencing domestic abuse in the year ending March 2022 GRT Identified as underreported- locally and nationally	Opportunity to engage with GRT communities due to council owed sites. Further engagement will assist in providing the correct service
Religion or belief	x			The established religions do not condone the abuse highlighted within this strategy	Awareness that region and cultural expectations are intersectional and can influence one another. This highlights the importance to understand crimes such as honour based abuse and Female genital mutilation and crimes linked to faith and beliefs.
Sex	x			Nationally there is a prevalence rate of approximately 7 in 100 women and 3 in 100 men experiencing domestic abuse 2022	Awareness of the prevalence of victims will assist us to offer the right service dependent on need. There is a good understanding of the support that men need, supported by a male worker in the community response team
Sexual orientation	x			Identified as underreported- locally and nationally	Opportunity to work with 'by and for' services

² https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/SAFJ4993_Themis_report_WEBcorrect.pdf

					locally, training or service provision
<p>Any other community issues identified for this location?</p> <p>If the project is based in a specific location please state where, or whether Borough wide. Please include any detail of relevance – for example, is it an area with high unemployment, or public transport limited?</p>	x			<p>Whilst domestic abuse affects all communities, the following wards have provided the most disclosures to the housing safeguarding team in Wards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grays • Tilbury 	Community engagement within these wards to raise awareness of support provision
<p>Workforce of Thurrock Council</p> <p>(e.g. in the case of service change/s)</p>	x			Women's staff network identified raising awareness of domestic abuse as a priority	Staff will become better informed and can use this knowledge in their engagement with the residents of Thurrock.
<p>Health and wellbeing of residents</p> <p>Please see guidance.</p>	x			Shared priorities between this strategy and HWB strategy and other Boards across Thurrock and Essex	Coordinated understanding and response
<p>Socio-economic outcomes</p> <p>Please see guidance.</p>	x			Thurrock Council Needs Assessment on Domestic Abuse Victims Residing in Safe Accommodation identified a strong association within some data sets and the deprivation levels across wards	Community engagement within these wards to raise awareness of support provision
<p>Veterans and serving members of the armed forces</p> <p>Please see guidance.</p>	x			New research found that Armed Forces personnel are significantly more likely to both experience and perpetrate intimate partner violence and	<p>Armed forces domestic abuse: a handbook for civilian support services</p> <p>Victim and perpetrator support services exist in the borough to assist anyone seeking support</p>

				abuse (IPVA) than the wider civilian population. ³	or wishing to change their own concerning behaviours.
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3. Monitoring and Review

<p>3.1 How will you review community and equality impact once the policy, strategy, function or service has been implemented? <i>These actions should be developed using the information gathered in Section 1 and 2 and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.</i></p>		
Action	By when?	By who?
Incorporate an annual review alongside existing review of strategy and action plan to ensure that information is still relevant and address any significant changes	Annually April 2024 April 2025	VAWG Board

4. Next steps

It is important to ensure that the information gathered is used to inform any council reports that are presented to Cabinet or Overview and Scrutiny committees. This will allow members to be furnished with all the facts in relation to the impact their decisions will have on different equality groups and the community as a whole.

Take some time to précis your findings below. This can then be added to your report template and the Equality and Diversity Implications section for sign off by the Community Development and Equalities team at the consultation stage of the report cycle.

Implications/ Customer Impact

³ <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/more-than-1-in-10-armed-forces-personnel-have-experienced-intimate-partner-violence-and-abuse>

Implications/ Customer Impact

This strategy will address contribute towards Thurrock Council meeting their duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Section 17 through the Thurrock Community Safety Partnership, and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. It addresses several shared priority themes within the Thurrock Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership and the Thurrock Adult Safeguarding Board.

The strategy continues to align to the national focus on the ever-changing VAWG landscape, whilst contributing to wider Essex priorities within the Police and Crime Plan and the Southend Essex, Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board.

Whilst every area has unique population concerns, these crimes do not know boundaries. There are common themes that are identified multiple times that tell us how to best support survivors of domestic abuse and VAWG crimes. The strategy has followed national and local data to inform its approach. Where we identified gaps in reporting, we seek to address this and increase the number of survivors coming forward. The strategy focuses on a whole societal approach, engaging communities, schools, professionals, partnerships, listening to what survivors want, and crucially, dealing with the perpetrators themselves.

5. Sign off

The information contained in this template should be authorised by the relevant project sponsor or Strategic Lead who will be responsible for the accuracy of the information now provided and delivery of actions detailed.

Name	Role – for example, project sponsor, head of service)	Date