

13 June 2023		ITEM: 7
Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Update report on Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls		
Wards and communities affected: Borough wide	Key Decision: N/a	
Report of: Michelle Cunningham, Thurrock Community Safety Partnership Manager		
Accountable Assistant Director: Michael Dineen, Assistant Director Counter Fraud, Community Safety and Resilience Ewelina Sorbjan, Assistant Director Housing and Chair of Thurrock's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Board		
Accountable Director: Julie Nelder, Interim Director of Public Realm Ian Wake, Corporate Director Adults, Health and Housing		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report provides members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee an opportunity to scrutinise the areas of work associated in delivering on the Thurrock Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2020-2023, (Appendix 1) as well as providing members with an update on progress to implement the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 duties and delivery against 2 of the priorities of the Community Safety Partnership 2022/23 which are:

1. Tackling disproportionality in relation to Violence Against Women and Girls
2. Breaking the cycle of Domestic Abuse

This will also provide an opportunity to comment on proposals of strategic direction within the revised Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy due for launch in 2023.

All forms of VAWG can affect anyone, regardless of age, disability, gender identity, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. The Crime

Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) year ending March 2022¹ highlights that an estimated 6.9% of women (1.7 million) and 3.0% of men (699,000) experienced domestic abuse in the last year. A higher proportion of adults aged 20 to 24 years were victims of domestic abuse in the last year compared with adults aged 55 years and over. A higher percentage of adults with a disability experienced domestic abuse in the last year than those without. This data shows that there was no significant change in the prevalence of domestic abuse for both men and women in the year ending March 2022, compared with the year ending March 2020. In the same year, data supplied from police forces nationally detailed that victims were female in 74.1% of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police, sadly, in case of domestic abuse-related sexual offences, the proportion of victims that were female was higher at 93.5%.

Recent years have seen implementation of new laws and policy to support the VAWG agenda. In November 2022 the UK became the 37th state to ratify, with some reservations, the Istanbul Convention². In July 2021, government published the revised national plan to address VAWG, titled, Tackling Violence against Women and Girls' strategy. This strategy includes a combination of prevention, intervention, and support measures aimed at reducing the incidences and impact of violence against women and girls. The strategy seeks to raise awareness and increase the understanding of the issues faced by people experiencing these crimes. The strategy reflects the strengthening of laws (Domestic Abuse Act 2021) and policies to protect women and girls from violence. It acknowledges the long-term support that survivors need to help them rebuild their lives. This strategy separated out domestic abuse due to the requirement of statutory guidance to support the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. As a result of these legislative changes, the National Statement of Expectations and other supportive documents were also updated.

Government refreshed the Male Victims Position statement, reiterating their commitment to ensure that male victims of crimes, which disproportionately affect women and girls, are supported. Whilst acknowledging the disproportionately gendered nature of VAWG, government VAWG communication campaigns are inclusive of male victims to raise awareness, challenge harmful societal myths about masculinity, and encourage male victims and survivors to report abuse. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 stipulates that a child who sees, hears, or experiences the effects of domestic abuse, and is related to the person being abused or the person perpetrating the abuse, is also regarded as a victim. Boys can be victims of domestic abuse in their own right, and the government acknowledges that boys can also suffer with short and long-term cognitive, behavioural, and emotional impact of the crimes they experience.

The Thurrock Community Safety Partnership (TCSP), through the VAWG Coordinator, seek to ensure that all partners, both statutory and voluntary, work together to provide effective support and protection to victims, including children, and a response to address the behaviour of perpetrators.

¹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2022>

² <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list?module=declarations-by-treaty&numSte=210&codeNature=2&codePays=UK>

The refreshed Health and Well Being strategy 2022/26 has provided opportunity to continue to address shared priorities in partnership. Domain 6 of the strategy sees a focus on improving the local response to supporting victims/survivors of abuse and exploitation to improve their health and wellbeing. These are collective aims of both the Thurrock and national strategies.

The statutory guidance for the Serious Violence Duty³, published 16th December 2022 states “Where domestic abuse or sexual offences are determined to be serious violence in a local area, in accordance with section 13(6) of the PCSC Act, specified authorities should take action to prevent and reduce such offending. Local areas’ strategy should include how they will exercise their functions to tackle domestic abuse and sexual offences” - and “action on domestic abuse and sexual offences is particularly encouraged where preventative activity is directed at risk factors which are shared between these crimes and public space youth violence”

In terms of the VAWG agenda, the TCSP priorities for 23/24 directly support 3 of the current priorities of the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner plan⁴. These include:

- Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse
- Reducing violence against women and girls
- Improving support for victims of crime

Members should be reassured that national and local strategies recognise that men and boys are also affected by these crimes and Thurrock’s support services for all VAWG crimes are available to any survivor regardless of gender identity or expression.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 Note the progress on delivery of responsibilities detailed within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and scrutinise the funding allocations**
- 1.2 Note the key successes and the programme to deliver on the VAWG strategy for Thurrock 2020/23**
- 1.3 Provide comment on the proposed vision and 6 Ps to deliver the Thurrock Domestic Abuse and VAWG strategy 2023/6**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 National & Local Framework:** The role of local authorities in the prevention of crime and disorder became a legal requirement under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. To meet this obligation, Community Safety Partnerships (as they are now known) were created, ensuring that the named ‘responsible authorities’ worked together on a statutory basis. Locally the

³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-duty

⁴ <https://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/>

VAWG work stream is a priority of the TCSP and is delivered by the Thurrock VAWG Strategic Board. Thurrock are the only authority in Essex to have a longstanding VAWG strategy.

- 2.2 The Ofsted review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges (2021)⁵ surveyed children aged 13+ on what types of harmful sexual behaviours they think happened 'a lot' or 'sometimes' between people their age: 79% of girls said sexual assault, 88% of girls said receiving pictures or videos they did not want to see, 53% of boys said rumours about sexual activity, 92% of girls said experiencing sexist name-calling. This rapid review concluded that sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are prevalent for children and young people. For some children, incidents were so commonplace that they saw no point in reporting them. The review did not analyse whether the issues are prevalent for different groups but found that they were so widespread that they need addressing for all children and young people. The key recommendation was that schools should assume that this is happening, even if there were no reports of it occurring.
- 2.3 A Call for Evidence on violence against women and girls was conducted by the Home Office in late 2020. The public survey was reopened following the tragic rape and murder of Sarah Everard. The total number of responses was 180,000, making this the largest ever consultation the Government has run in this area. The responses detail a need for change in areas aligned to the national priorities: Prioritising Prevention, Supporting Victims, Pursuing Perpetrators, a Stronger System. Sadly, this violence continues, 108 UK women were killed by men (or where a man is the principal suspect) in 2022⁶. Women are murdered on average every three days in the UK. Inside and outside of homes. Mostly, by people they know and trust.
- 2.4 In 2021, The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) announced the appointment of a National Police Lead for Violence Against Women and Girls to coordinate police action across England and Wales. The new role is responsible for agreeing and delivering a new police strategy that will focus on interventions to prevent violence, target perpetrators, and help victims achieve justice. Essex Police have since developed a Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2022-2024. This is principally an internal facing document, focusing on High Harm, Safer Spaces and Culture and Behaviours.
- 2.5 The Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Crime Plan 2021-2024⁷ recognises this agenda with the priority of **Reducing violence against women and girls**, stating that they will not tolerate male violence and abuse against women and girls in any form. This is in addition to the priorities of **Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse**

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges>

⁶ Karen Ingala Smith: CountingDeadWomen

⁷ <https://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/what-we-are-doing/police-and-crime-plan/encouraging-volunteers-and-community-support/>

and **Improving support for victims of crime. Domestic Abuse and Rape** are also identified within the Crime Prevention Strategy for Essex 2021/25 (Appendix 2) as 2 of the 14 thematic strands which Essex Police recognise not only pose the greatest potential threat, harm and risk to our people and communities, but also present the greatest opportunity for prevention.

2.6 In 2022, following the direction of national strategy and Essex Police Fire Crime Plan, Thurrock CSP separated Domestic Abuse from VAWG to individual priorities for 2022/23 namely:

- **Tackling disproportionality in relation to Violence Against Women and Girls** – including sexual offences, stalking and rape, whilst recognising that men and boys can also be victims
- **Breaking the cycle of Domestic Abuse:** in line with the Domestic Abuse Duty and needs assessment

Violence Against Women and Girls – encompasses sexual violence, abuse and exploitation; stalking; sexual harassment; domestic abuse; female genital mutilation (FGM); forced marriage and so called “Honour” based abuse of all genders.

2.7 Progress to delivery of actions within the Violence Against women and Girls Strategy 2020/23

There have been several key successes of the current Thurrock VAWG strategy and notable progression within other internal services that contributes to and has an impact on the response and support offered to victims of VAWG related crimes and behaviours. A summary of activity is detailed below:

- 2.7.1 The domestic violence perpetrator programme continues to support individuals, assessed as standard/medium risk, who wish to change their abusive behaviours towards others. This includes a dedicated Integrated Support Service for victims of domestic abuse and their children. The programme is available for men, women, and those within same sex relationships. This programme is for those who want to stop being abusive towards intimate partners and are motivated to change their behaviour. The programme is accompanied by the ‘high risk’ service offered by the domestic abuse practitioner in Childrens Social Care.
- 2.7.2 The Housing Safeguarding team have an outreach support service for domestic abuse victims. This is a developing initiative including reaching out to residents on the Thurrock Council managed traveller sites and Buckles Lane. They also have male practitioners to assist with any survivor who might feel more comfortable seeking support from a male, however all practitioners can support any survivor of domestic abuse.
- 2.7.3 Thurrock is involved in the county wide TONIC landscape review of the current model of support for survivors of domestic abuse. The initial findings are

currently being reviewed by commissioners across SET. They will offer recommendations across all of SET for further commissioning and delivery model options of accessing support. This project ensures that Thurrock are involved in joint commissioning opportunities, working in a consistent way across SET and striving towards improved services for victims and survivors.

2.7.4 The Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LCSP) identified a need to better understand the issues associated with Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) experienced and displayed by young people. To help inform this understanding, in partnership with the NSPCC, they have conducted a multi-agency audit that will seek to identify current practitioner awareness of HSB and the pathways of support for young people displaying such behaviours. Initial findings are expected early 2023.

2.7.5 The CSP offer a comprehensive suite of training covering awareness of VAWG including:

- Domestic Abuse & Stalking awareness training: an initiative aimed at raising awareness of domestic abuse, assisting survivors to access support safely by training and upskilling professionals in their responses. In 2022 a total of 100 people attended the training.
- Professionals visit to Thurrock Women's Refuge: This provides professionals the opportunity to have a greater understanding of what it is like to reside in the Refuge. Verbal feedback is extremely positive from the visiting professionals and the Refuge, enabling further networking and building connections.
- J9 Community: Members of the community can access this training to gain a greater understanding of what domestic abuse is, recognise domestic abuse and signpost survivors to specialist support services.
- Sexual Violence & Abuse Awareness training: Following a successful bid for funding to the Thurrock Safeguarding Adults Board, an 'e learning' module was commissioned. This self-paced awareness module will ensure that we can offer this awareness training to a large partnership audience and increase understanding of this topic so that survivors can be signposted to professionals for the right support.
- Sexual violence and abuse from the perspective of men and boys-independent awareness sessions delivered to staff and Members.

2.7.6 Annual promotion of initiatives such as '16 days of activism' through November and December. This year saw TCSP, and partners host two community engagement events, one outside South Essex College to engage young people, the second was opposite Grays Train station, capturing commuters and Thurrock residents. Cllr Arnold supported this event attending and speaking to many involved. We continued to promote the Street Safe website, a Home Office service where residents can anonymously report where they don't feel safe in the borough

2.7.7 The street safe data will be used within the forthcoming Project Minerva, an area of work looking at safety in public spaces. This is an emerging project which TCSP members were briefed on in January 2023.

2.7.8 There was a relaunch of the SET wide stalking awareness campaign, REFLECT campaign (perpetrator behaviour change support) and Ask for Angela.

2.7.9 The VAWG agenda now has a Champion, Cllr Arnold for VAWG, and Cllr Collins for Men's health issues.

2.8 Progress in implementation of The Domestic Abuse Act 2021⁸

2.8.1 The Domestic Abuse Act introduced a new statutory definition of domestic abuse with an aim to ensure that it is properly understood, considered unacceptable and actively challenged across statutory agencies and in public attitudes. Part 4 of the Act places several statutory duties on tier 1 local authorities in England relating to the provision of support for victims and their children residing within relevant safe accommodation. Local Authorities have been awarded 'new burdens' funding by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to deliver the new duties.

2.8.2 Thurrock continue to meet their obligations as set out by the Act. The Thurrock VAWG Strategic Board remains the 'domestic abuse local partnership board' for the local area. We completed our first needs assessment for accommodation-based domestic abuse support, for survivors and their children in their area, including the need of those coming from outside the area. The provision of support that was commissioned as a result of the needs assessment is detailed within the Thurrock VAWG strategy which was amended to reflect the new duties. A change in this included the decision to for modern slavery and human trafficking to have a standalone strategy and plan from April 2022.

2.8.3 In June 2022 we submitted our first annual return to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities regarding the allocation of spend of the 'new burdens' fund for 2021/22, in which Thurrock was allocated £366,530. To offer consistency to service provision and in line with the statutory guidance, it was agreed that the funding would be allocated for a 3-year period, in anticipation of continued government funding as assured. This time period aligns with the requirement for future needs assessment. The spending will continue to fund the same services for 2022/23 and 2023/24 in line with the needs assessment recommendations, subject to any amendments as part of the annual review and is detailed at *Appendix 3*. Any underspend proposal will be discussed with the VAWG Board for consultation purposes prior to reallocation. New burdens spending from April 2024 onwards will be determined by a new needs assessment and forthcoming recommendations.

⁸ [The Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

2.9 Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)

DHRs were established on a statutory basis through the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004). A DHR is a multi-agency review of the 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 to whom they were related or with whom they were, or had been, in an intimate personal relationship, or a member of the same household as themselves. They are also undertaken where a victim took their own life (suicide) and the circumstances give rise to concern, for example it emerges that there was coercive controlling behaviour in the relationship. Section 9 of the Act came into force on 13 April 2011 which requires Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to undertake a DHR following a domestic homicide that meets the criteria.

The Homicide Index data, to the year ending March 2021 highlights that 72.1% of victims of domestic homicide were female. In the majority (77.0%) of female domestic homicides the suspect was a male partner or ex-partner, whereas in the majority (62.5%) of male domestic homicides, the suspect was a male family member.

There is also increasing acknowledgment and awareness amongst domestic abuse support organisations that national data is not reflecting the true toll of the number of suicides related to domestic abuse. This is also reflected in the ONS analysis 'The lasting impact of violence against women and girls' recognising the link between surviving these crimes and suicide. Survivors in the analysis were quoted to feeling the only way out was to take their own life, some attempting suicide several times during and soon after the end of the relationship.

The DHR process has been centralised across SET and coordinated by the SET Domestic Abuse team for several years. In 2021, Thurrock CSP alongside the Thurrock Adult Safeguarding Board, commissioned their first Domestic Homicide Review with a Safeguarding Adult Review being conducted alongside, this concluded in late 2022. The report is currently with the Home Office for approval, it remains confidential to the wider public until publication is agreed, however CSP members, the responsible body, alongside members of the Adult Safeguarding Board have been briefed privately. The CSP and TSAB will continue to work with SETDAB (Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board) and relevant partners to implement the recommendations of the report whilst awaiting official endorsement.

3. **Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

The current VAWG strategy was agreed by this committee in 2020. The members of the Thurrock VAWG Strategic Board were consulted on proposals for the new strategy for 2023/26. This strategy aims to tackle the continuum of Violence against Women and Girls, including domestic abuse – in Thurrock. The key elements of these proposals are outlined below:

- 3.1 Overall vision: **Reduce the prevalence of VAWG crimes and ensure that where they do happen, all those affected get the right support.**
- 3.2 Priorities 6 Ps: It is recognised that the existing priorities are still effective and offer the best direction for this area of work, complementing national and local strategies as detailed previously. The proposed priorities for the new strategy are: **Positive communities, Prevention, Partnership, Provision and Protection.** The VAWG board have agreed with the addition of one more priority titled **Participation: Ensure survivors voices are heard (and influence decision making).** This additional priority will assist us to embed survivor voice across the work that we do so we are survivor led, not only in domestic abuse but across the wider VAWG agenda.
- 3.3 To assist us with the delivery of the 6th priority, we are working closely with SETDAB colleagues to ensure that there is a consistent approach to survivor engagement across SET, whilst seeking to capture the local differences of survivor experiences within Thurrock. Survivors should not have to navigate different engagement processes or not feel able to engage across boundaries. This will be a long-term piece of work, moulded by survivor input.
- 3.4 The NHS have a crucial role in supporting survivors of VAWG crimes. It was reported that 44% of domestic abuse victims disclosed to a health professional in the first instance, as identified in the Domestic Abuse Commissioners recent report (A Patchwork of Provision)⁹ In the most extreme cases, victims of domestic abuse on average would attend A&E up to 15 times before targeted intervention was provided¹⁰. Integrated Care Boards (ICB) were introduced in 2022, replacing the existing Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG). The legislation has directed the Boards to prepare an integrated care strategy. This strategy should also address the drivers of unwarranted variation in population health and disparities health and wellbeing outcomes, access, and experience, including people with trauma from violence or abuse. The domestic abuse statutory guidance states that ‘Responding to and preventing domestic abuse should be a strategic priority for both ICBs and ICPs and should be the responsibility of all healthcare professionals working within a system. An ICS is expected to have a joined up, collaborative response to domestic abuse across its geographical footprint.’¹¹
- 3.5 Forthcoming legislative changes that will impact the VAWG agenda nationally and in Thurrock include:
- 3.5.1 The Serious Violence Duty -The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022 introduced a Serious Violence Duty to ensure specified authorities such as police, fire and rescue services, health, local authorities, youth offending teams and probation services work collaboratively to put in place a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence. Section 13 of the

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-patchwork-of-provision-mapping-report>

¹⁰ <https://safelives.org.uk/policy-evidence/getting-it-right-first-time>

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-act-2021/domestic-abuse-statutory-guidance-accessible-version>

PCSC Act 2022 explicitly includes domestic abuse and sexual offences within the definition of “violence” for the purpose of the Serious Violence Duty.

- 3.5.2 Online safety Bill-In progression- This Bill will require companies to take swift and effective action against illegal content targeted at women. Illegal content that platforms will need to remove includes child sexual abuse, extreme sexual violence, and sexual exploitation.
- 3.5.3 The Victims Bill-placing a duty on relevant local bodies to coordinate victim support services; and crucially, placing Independent Sexual Violence Advisors and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors on statutory.
- 3.5.4 The implementation timetable for the Domestic Abuse Act has been revised. The pilot programme for Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders Pilot will begin in spring 2024.

3.6 Equality Impact Assessment

The Community Equality Impact Assessment for the proposed Domestic Abuse and VAWG strategy 2023/26 has highlighted:

- There is a gender imbalance in relation to reported crime. Nationally, most victims were female, and the majority of perpetrators are male
- Elder abuse is acknowledged as under reported
- Pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to domestic abuse
- National research highlights that BAME, LGBT and disabled individuals face additional barriers when reaching out to seek help.
- The established religions do not condone the abuse highlighted within this strategy
- Domestic abuse affects all communities, certain wards have higher reporting levels.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 This report provides the committee with an opportunity to be assured that Thurrock Council is meeting its statutory requirements as detailed in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 as outlined in 2.8
- 4.2 This report provides the committee with a summary of the key successes towards delivery of the VAWG strategy 2020/23.
- 4.3 This paper provides the committee with an opportunity to comment on the proposed vision and priorities of the Domestic Abuse and VAWG strategy for Thurrock 2023/26

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Annual reporting to the Cleaner, Greener, Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee providing opportunity to scrutinise commitment to delivery of statutory duties placed on the Local Authority from the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and note the progress against the current strategy.

- 5.2 Hidden and Extreme Harms Committee – There have been presentations and discussion on sexual violence from the perspective of males, and training provided on the both the wider topic of sexual violence and abuse. This Committee requested that modern slavery was removed from a future VAWG strategy and requested a standalone document to tackle this crime. This has been completed.
- 5.3 Annual report to the Community Safety Partnership Board and Health and Well Being Board
- 5.4 Consultation with the VAWG Strategic Board members is a key process within the requirements of a domestic abuse local partnership board. The Board members have been consulted on the proposed spending of the new burdens funding and the strategic direction of the new strategy. This resulted in a vote to remain as one VAWG strategy and not to separate out domestic abuse from VAWG. They viewed this as key to the existing strong collaborative working.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 The VAWG strategy is central to delivering Thurrock Council's priority of:
- **People** - a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay. All elements of this priority are relevant to VAWG.
 - **Prosperity** - a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations. In particular 'vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all.' which provides victims with access further opportunities to help them rebuild their lives.
- 6.2 VAWG crimes affect our residents, and this is recognised in the Health and Well Being Strategy 2022- 2026. The HWB Board receive updates in relation to activities relating to domain 6 of the strategy, once again evidencing the shared priorities across different services. This provides a focus on the wider determinants of health including domestic and sexual violence and / abuse.
- 6.3 The VAWG action plan links closely to and supports delivery of the SETDAB Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020-2025. Within the PFCC Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 it supports the priorities of reducing violence against women and girls, protecting vulnerable people, and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse and improving support for victims of crime.
- 6.4 The VAWG strategic board have contributed to the draft drug and alcohol needs assessment and recommendations will be included within the action plan as relevant.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Laura Last**

Senior Management Accountant

Thurrock Council allocations for the New Burdens funding are in the table below and spend for 21/22 and indicative spend for 22/23 detailed in Appendix 3.

This project has experienced some delays due to the requirement to commission against the outcome of a needs assessment, having regard for statutory guidance published in late 2021 and then identifying the appropriate service for those needs, including recruitment of staff to those positions and therefore some carry forwards of this grant funding have been required.

All spend detail for 22/23 is indicative at this stage pending the completion of all year-end adjustments in order to reach an outturn position for the Council.

In addition, a grant return for 22/23 is due to be submitted to central government on 30th June

Year	Amount
2021/22	£366,530- received
2022/23	£367,545- received
2023/24	£374,897- confirmed allocation
2024/25	£381,970 - confirmed allocation

The New Burdens fund for 22/24 has committed to funding the post of the VAWG Coordinator. The TCSP in 2022/23 committed £4k of funding for training and awareness raising. The Public Realm Directorate contribute £17k for the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Nicola Monerville**
Principal Solicitor, Safeguarding, LBBD.

The allocation of funding has followed the statutory guidance. Where spend has not occurred directly within 'safe accommodation' establishments it will offer a service to cohorts who are accessing 'safe accommodation.' The VAWG Board has been consulted on proposals of spend, as per the Board role in statutory guidance.

Childrens Domestic abuse support group – Children are victims in the own right in law as per the Domestic Abuse Act. A proportion of children or their

adult with parental responsibility accessing this service, will also be accessing safe accommodation, (Refuge/Sanctuary)

Funding of the Partner link worker element of the perpetrator intervention provision- some of the client group will also be accessing safe accommodation in Thurrock.

Flexible Fund – Funding is provided to organisations who directly support clients in ‘safe accommodation’ or a proportion of clients accessing this fund will be accessing safe accommodation such as sanctuary. Use of the flexible fund follows the principles of the Whole Housing approach; this approach is supported by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**
**Community Engagement and Project
Monitoring Officer**

The key findings from the draft Community Equality Impact Assessment (appendix 4) are articulated in 3.6. It is proposed to further review this with a panel and any further identified actions will be included within the delivery plan.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e., Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children

This report contributes towards Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act.

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council’s website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- [HM Government: Tackling violence against women and girls strategy- July 2021](#)
- [The Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

9. Appendices to the report

1. Thurrock DA and VAWG Strategy 2023/26
2. **Crime Prevention Strategy 2021-2025**
3. Breakdown of new burdens funding 2021/22
4. Community Equality Impact Assessment

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